THE WORLD'S BEST CONSOLE AND HANDHELD GAMES MAGAZINE

RAZE No 12

OCTOBER 1991

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RAZE

NINTENDO

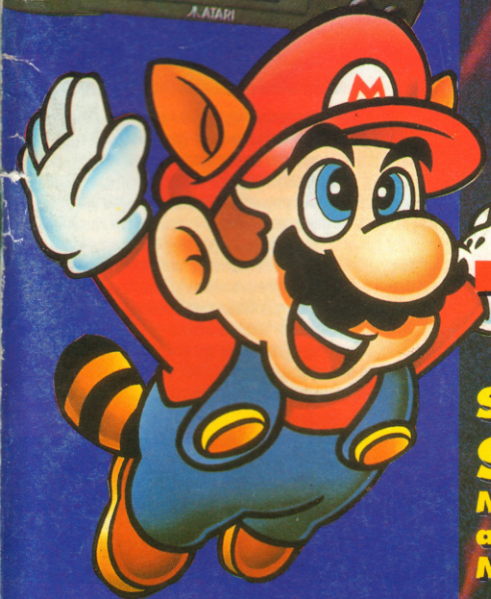
NES
GAME BOY
SUPER FAMICOM

SEGA

MASTER
GAME GEAR
MEGA DRIVE

ATARI

LYNX
7800



POWERGLOVE

Punching into the UK!

Arnie's back and it's not a re-run! Prepare for explosive action on the NES and Game Boy as Judgement Day arrives!

TERMINATOR 2

Scoop preview!

SUPER MARIO BROS 3

Monsters, mini-bosses, mazes, mayhem and more in the most magnificent Mario game yet!

10

9 770960 770008

The ST is just t

The Atari ST is the perfect introduction to the world of computing. The power of the ST allows you to run "serious" applications as well as playing games, and the ST system is flexible enough to allow you to expand as you develop your interests and expertise in different applications.

With so much diversity and power it is easy to see why the Atari ST family is one of the most successful ranges of computers in the world. But best of all is the built-in growth potential. The 520ST user of today is the TT user of tomorrow; beginning with games or a simple word processor, anyone can learn about computers and gradually acquire the skills of the professional computer user. And unlike many other systems, an Atari upgrade is not wasteful. Much of the software available for the 520ST will run on both the Mega STe and the TT systems. With an Atari an upgrade means that you can add new capabilities and expand your computing horizons without losing everything you have acquired along the way.

*If you thought that computers were all about playing games you've been missing out on the real potential that you and your computer have. To find out more about either the **Atari ST** or peripherals for any applications simply fill in the coupon and send it to Atari at the address below.*

*Whether you are looking for a leisure computer, an educational computer, a computer for all the family or a powerful business system, look no further than the **Atari ST Range.***

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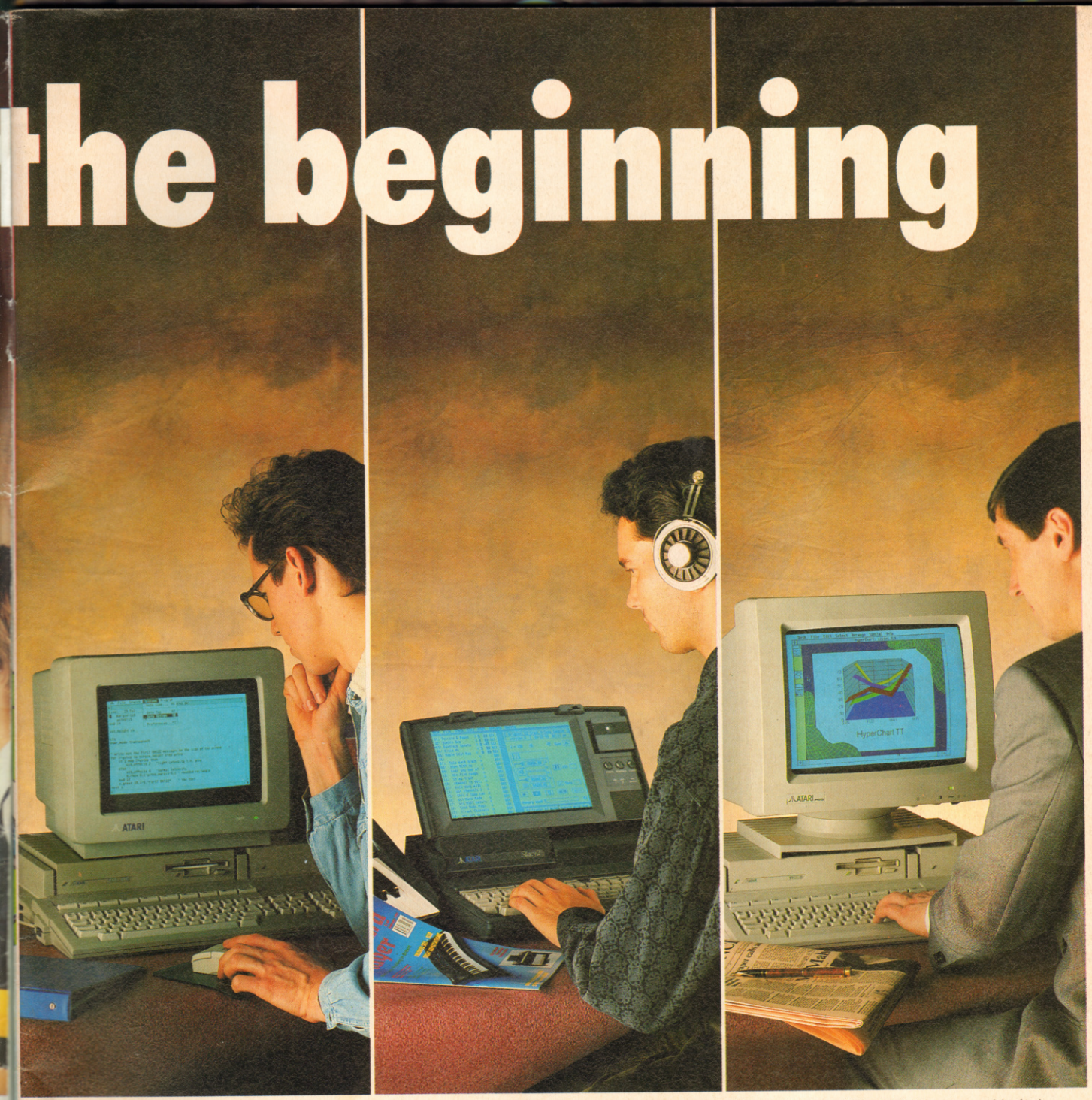
Atari Corp UK Ltd, Atari House, Railway Terrace, Slough SL2 5BZ

The **Atari 520ST** is an easy way for you and your family to learn about computers while having a great deal of fun. This best-selling computer has an impressive range of features that fit many requirements at home or in the office. A generous 512K RAM memory is included as standard - enough to run large spreadsheets and databases as well as the latest generation of computer games. There are plenty of expansion ports available for printers, modems, monitors and hard disk, and other peripherals allowing you to increase the power and flexibility of your system as needed.
MIDI expansion ports are fitted as standard. MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) is the music industry standard interface that allows you to control both recording and playback of synthesisers and other digital instruments with your computer.

There is no other computer range in the UK that can offer its users such a wide variety of software support, ranging from educational learning programs to 16-bit computer games to professional quality desktop publishing packages.

The ATARI ST

the beginning



The power of the new **Mega STe** range makes it a serious contender for those who are after power computing. It is an ideal machine for the student or computer enthusiast who wants to run memory intensive applications such as Computer Aided Design (CAD) or graphics applications. The Mega STe features separate keyboard and central processor with a 1MB floppy disk drive and a 50MB Hard Drive for data storage. The Mega STe features a fast 16MHz operating speed, which can be switched to 8MHz to run any programs developed for the 520ST, making it even easier for you to upgrade.

For those of you who want to run a 'home office' with separate files for word processing, spreadsheets and accounts packages the Mega STe - with its vast amount of built-in hard disk storage - is an excellent choice. For those running graphics intensive programs the faster operating speed will make the Mega STe a much more productive machine. The Mega STe also features an extensive range of expansion ports that allow you to add even more power and flexibility to your system.

The portable **Atari Stacy** is completely compatible with all monochrome ST programs, but allows for complete portability.
It features a supertwist backlit LCD mono screen, split horizontally and has all the standard ST ports. It is available in various configerations, with Hard disk as standard.
It weighs approximately 15.2 pounds and has its own carrying handle making it easy to transfer from place to place.
Because the ST, with its MIDI interface has become the accepted standard in the music industry, the Stacy is a boon machine for musicians with a busy schedule. Songs and sequences written at home can be stored on the built-in hard disk, then the whole computer can be easily transported to the studio or gig, with minimum stress, they can even be worked upon and improved on the road.
Although it is the most specialist member of the ST family, the Stacy is still versatile enough to be used for all serious ST applications.

The incredibly powerful **Atari TT**, at the very top of the Atari range, is the first in a new generation of high specification professional personal workstations based on the successful Atari ST standard. Similar in style and design to the Mega STe, the Atari TT features a separate keyboard, 1MB floppy disk, 50 MB Hard Drive and the same range of excellent expansion ports. The basic model comes configured with 2MB RAM which can be expanded up to a massive 26MB. With a Motorola 68030 central processor, the TT runs at up to 32MHz. But speed and power are not all the TT system offers the professional user. Six standard built-in screen resolution modes mean that there is always one suitable for the purpose that you have in mind. For animation or computer graphics, choose from a pallette of over 4,000 colours with the ability to display 256 on screen at any one time, and the exceptional 1280 x 960 pixel high resolution mode is one of the best screen modes available at any price.

— More than just great games

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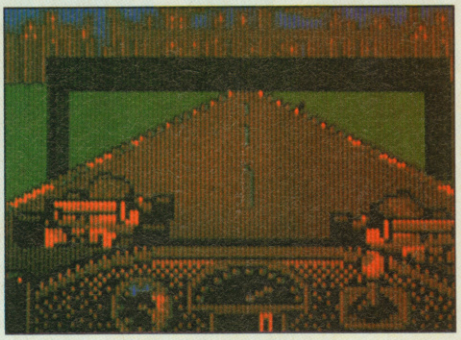
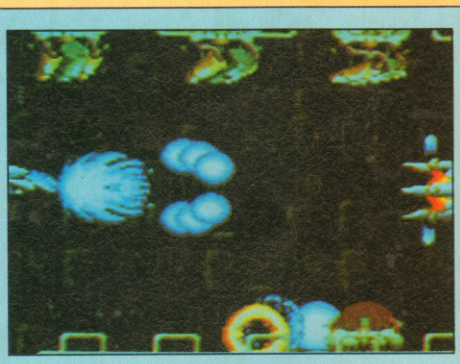


Red light, yellow light, green light - go
CHEQUERED FLAG.....24

■ Atari Lynx ■



Seven sensational action-packed levels
SUPER R-TYPE.....39

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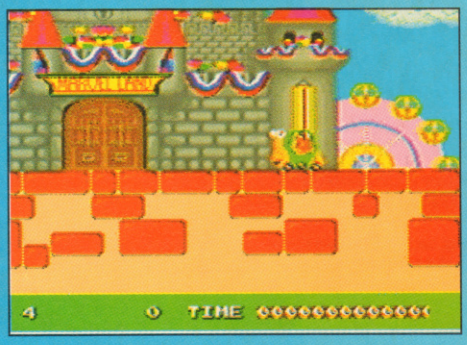

Cute comic clashes and colour capers in
MARVEL LAND 56

■ Mega Drive ■

TRAP A TURTLE!...82
Turtley rad, dudes, Nintendo are giving away a splendiferous NES plus Turtles game pak. Phantasmagorical, isn't it?

BATTLETOADS!... 14
Toadally awesome, meisters, get ready for some terrible, towering, toadsplatting action as the latest sensation to sweep the nation reaches our shores. Make no mistake, the Toads make the Turtles look like pond scum!

EDITOR Richard Monteiro. **STAFF WRITERS** Les Ellis, Robin Wyles. **JAPAN CORRESPONDENT** Shintaro Kanaoya. **COIN-OP CORRESPONDENT** Suzy Uki. **DESIGN & LAYOUT** Ian Chubb **ADVERTISEMENT SALES EXECUTIVE** Neil Probert. **GROUP PROMOTIONS EXECUTIVE** Richard Eddy. **MAIL ORDER** Carol Kinsey. **SUBSCRIPTIONS** Caroline Edwards. **PUBLISHER** Franco Frey. **MANAGING DIRECTOR** Jonathan Rignall.
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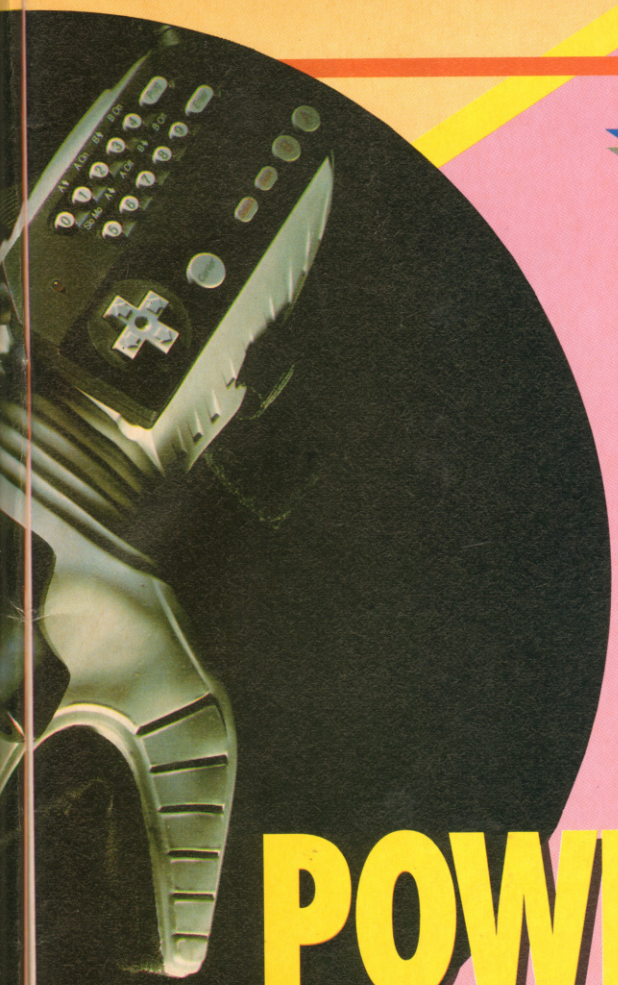
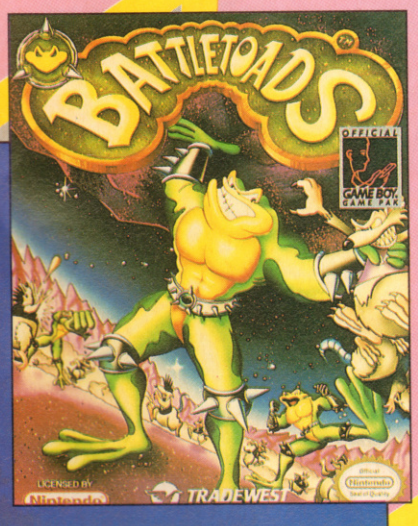
RAZE



POWER SUPREME!



Mattel's Power Glove is all the rage in Japan and America – RAZE powers up, slips into something more comfortable and tries this bodacious NES input device for size. Pathetic appendage or precursor to virtual reality?

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ROCKIN' AND RAZEN'

You've got to ask yourself three questions:

- How does RAZE manage to come up with exclusive in-depth reports of the worldwide console entertainment scene every month?
- Why is it that RAZE has more console reviews for more consoles than any other magazine?
- What would your life be like without RAZE's hard-hitting editorials, fact-packed exposes and in-depth guides?

Now tell me; do you feel lucky? Well, do ya?

Crammed into this month's explosive and complete package for your console you'll find:
An exclusive preview of NES *Terminator 2*.
First reports of NEC's PC Engine laptop.
Scoop review of *Battletoads* on the Game Boy.
Massive exclusive preview of *Super Mario 3*.
Two top Neo•Geo games reviewed and rated.
Super R-Type on the Super Famicom exposed.
Eight pages packed with the hottest game tips.
Sonic the Hedgehog's hidden rooms unveiled.
Scoop review of the revolutionary Power Glove.

RAZE – playing the game to perfection

RAZE RAVERS

IAN CHUBB

Master of disguise, Ian once dressed up as a Mega Drive cartridge. Unfortunately he had a bad experience while being inserted into a cartridge slot and has abstained from hot slots ever since.

LES ELLIS

This wandering minstrel – nay, travelling bard – was all set to have his name carved into the echelons of pop history when he discovered a different type of pop: Woody Pop, Pop Breaker and lollipop.

SUZY UKI

Mistress of the night, temptress of all seasons, slave to love – call her what you like, but this woman will be yours forever if you can fulfil her desires for high-powered pulsating hydraulically-operated coin-ops.

SHINTARO KANAOYA

If a word starts with 's' then Shintaro's all for it: sake, sushi, Sado, samurai, Sen-no Rikyu, Suzy Uki and sex. He's also very partial to Setsubun and enjoys wailing "Fuku wa uchi! Fuku wa uchi! Oni wa soto!" on the 4th of February.

ROBIN WYLES

He's a small town big timer – knows everyone. And consequently thrives on being able to supply you with what you want when you want. Rumours have it that he's muscling in on Jason Holborn's skin trade (Biactol, that is).

fastforwo

LOAN GROANS

The concept of hiring out games cartridges isn't a particular new one; the Atari VCS2600 used to do a roaring trade through video shops. Renting out games is also a good idea, especially nowadays when Sega and Nintendo are charging between £25 and £50 to buy a cart.

Recently, the console giants have shown their real colours and revealed their thoughts on renting. On the side of the goodies (i.e. you, me and anyone else who can't afford to buy all the latest games every month) are SNK, the manufacturers of the Neo•Geo. Their UK distributor, De Gale Marketing, positively welcomes rental, even pushing machines not just games into the video shops. Although the official launch of the Neo•Geo has now been delayed till spring, there's already an official Neo•Geo rental club.

Meanwhile, in the other camp we find Nintendo and Sega, both taking legal advice over the illegal hiring of their carts from video shops. Their main grievance is with Blockbuster Video who hire both formats for just £1 per night. Many other smaller video shops are also seeing money in this profitable idea and are following suit.

The problem lies with the copyright of Sega and Nintendo carts. To hire them out, companies are supposed to obtain permission from the copyright holders. Obviously, this has slipped most rental shops' minds and they have hired normal carts with no regard to Sega or Nintendo. At a recent trade conference, Sega said that the rental schemes currently in operation were doing serious damage to their business.

If the prosecution of video shops goes through, it could mean a hefty lawsuit on their hands. However, if there's such a market out there, wouldn't it be better if Sega and Nintendo came to a settlement with the video shops whereby an official scheme was set up. Come on Sega and Nintendo, give the rest of us a chance; we aren't making the sort of money you are.

ward

NINTENDO CD SET

Nintendo are all set to launch the Super Famicom's CD-ROM... in August 1992. The machine is being put together in a joint effort between Nintendo and Philips, and will be compatible with the CD-I players which are to be launched in the States this October. Nintendo are keeping the tech-spec close to their chests, but the use of Philips ensures this one will make Sega's Mega-CD run for cover.

Meanwhile, Sony – who designed the powerful Super Famicom sound chip – could be releasing a SF CD-ROM of their own. Rumour has it that the hi-fi giants are planning to release a third-party, non-official CD-ROM in time for this Christmas in Japan.

£99 MEGA DRIVE?

Sega's Mega Drive could be set to drop to £99 before the year is out. All roads point to this figure after details were leaked concerning a price drop in France. Before the end of the year, the French machine will be retailing for the equivalent of around £100. It seems only common sense to speculate that the UK machine will receive a similar price drop, either just before or after Christmas 1991. This still doesn't equate to Japanese prices, which are around £50, and reveals to the UK public how over-priced the official Mega Drive was when it was launched at £189.99. Indeed, the current UK price of £149.99 only occurred because Dixons dropped the price of their Mega Drives and all the independents demanded similar trade prices to the multiples. If Sega UK had their way, we'd still be paying almost £200 for the machine.

CONSOLE CITY

With shows a-plenty to choose from at this time of the year, it's worth pointing out which are best. All promise "all computers covered" but very few actually have console coverage of any worth. The latest All-Formats Computer Fairs promise to cover every machine "especially the console area". Well, the only way you'll find out if they're telling the truth is by going along for yourself.

In all honesty, these Fairs are the best place to go if you want to obtain the latest hardware and software at the cheapest prices. Most of the big mail order companies will be there and are usually more than happy to chat about what and how good the latest releases are.

Here are the latest dates and venues for the Fairs.

Sept 1: University of Leeds Exhibition and Sports Centre, Calverley Street, Leeds.

Sept 7: Royal Horticultural Hall, Greycoats Street, Westminster, London.

Sept 14: National Motor Cycle Museum, Solihull, Birmingham.

Sept 22: City Hall, Candleriggs, Glasgow.

All shows take place between 10am and 4pm. For more information contact (0225) 868100.

VIRGIN SELL-OUT

Sega's longtime distributors in Europe, Virgin Mastertronic, have been bought out by the Jap giants. In a deal reputed to be worth around £40 million, Sega Japan have bought all of the equity in Virgin Mastertronic. Sega are now predicting a massive increase in sales in Europe. In fact over the next 12 months, Virgin believe they will turn over £250 million. Virgin/Sega also claim that there are now 440,000 Master Systems installed in the UK and 120,000 Mega Drives. In Europe as a whole, Sega claim two million 8-bit consoles and 360,000 Mega Drives.

JAGUAR JUMPS

The fabled Atari 64-bit console, Jaguar, replacement of the Panther, is just having the finishing touches added to its technical design. Atari are positive they'll have development machines with software companies by the end of the year. The handful of companies who had Jaguars, reputedly including the likes of Psygnosis and Jeff Minter, are all champing at the bit to get hold of the units.

CONSOLES CRACK UP

It looks as though the much scoffed at Amstrad GX4000 and CBM 64GS may have finally bitten the dust. High street giant Dixons announced last month that both machines were currently being sold at £29.99, with the GX4000 dropping soon to £19.99. In a blunt statement, Dixons said that the Amstrad had sold just as they had expected (terribly). The current price cuts clearly indicate that Dixons want to dump these machines as quickly as possible. Our commiserations go out to all those that bought either machine (especially the GX4000 which Amstrad are still selling for £99.99 RRP).

It's the end for the Amstrad GX4000, now selling for a paltry £19.99. Don't be tempted by it though, because it will only encourage Amstrad to produce another one.

CHIT CHAT

★ Thanks to our expert layout person, there were a couple of cock-ups in the ratings last month. On the Game Boy version of *WWF*, the rating should have read 79% (not the mysterious 61% that appeared on the roadsign instead). Similarly, *Dragon Crystal* on the Game Gear also got the ubiquitous 61%, when it should have got 84%. Oh, the joy of DTP templates...

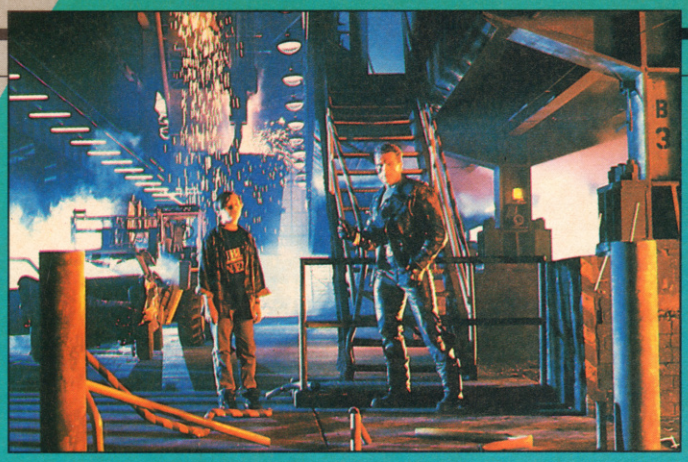
★ Ballistic, Accolade's new console label, is currently on a roll after the success of *Star Control*. After *Hardball*, their next release will be *Onslaught*. *Turrican* will follow at the end of August with *Mike Ditka Power Football* coming out in September. (Mike Ditka's the head coach at the Chicago Bears.) Ballistic's big Christmas release will be a conversion of their amazing car game *Duel: Test Drive 2*. All will retail for £39.99

★ Ubi Soft will be developing Lucasfilm's *Star Wars* on the Game Boy. This is expected to be the first of many Game Boy and a few NES titles from the French company.

★ A new range of sticks for both Nintendo and Sega are now available in the UK. Gravis sticks have become a household name in the States, and their UK distributors, Spectravideo, hope to have similar success over here. You can contact Spectravideo on (081) 900024. (Er, by the way, the price is around a whopping £50 each!)

★ Nintendo will be well-pleased to learn that in a recent survey of traders, the Game Boy came out as most reliable games machine around. According to the figures, about 2% of Game Boys are ever faulty while under warranty. The NES followed close behind, and then the Sega and Atari machines.

★ The Mario Brothers film, inspired by the cult Nintendo game characters, should open early next year. The movie has a budget of $35 million and is being produced by Goldcrest Film and TV.



TERMINAL ILL

Despite British Rail's best attempts to terminate him, Les Ellis met up with the guys behind *T2*

If you haven't heard of, or even seen, The Terminator by now then you should probably visit your video shop more often. James Cameron's first blockbuster film, before Aliens and The Abyss, was made with just a few million dollars, yet when on to gross over $35 million. The story of a woman's attempt to combat a cyborg sent back from the future to kill her before she can give birth to a future resistance leader became *the* cult sci-fi movie of 1984, a year which itself was shrouded in George Orwell's dark vision of the future. Ever since the film hit video, there has been talk of a sequel – by the fans at least. But there was one small problem: Arnie was dead at the end of T1. No trouble; if Hollywood's writers can bring back Bobby in Dynasty, then this shouldn't present a problem.

The story starts with Sarah Conner in a mental institution (unsurprisingly) and her son, John, staying with relatives. Meanwhile, many years into the future, the machines that rule the land are sending back another terminator to kill John before he is old enough to become a danger. At the same time, the resistance are developing a terminator to send back to protect young John from the machines' metal monster. As the cinema trailer puts it: "One programmed to destroy, the other programmed to protect."

With Cameron fresh from his megabuck movie The Abyss, the making of Terminator 2 wasn't going to be cheap (rumoured to be around $80 million). But one thing has to be said: you can tell where the money went, because it's right up there on the screen in front of you. And that's exactly what American audiences appreciated as the movie made $92 million (!) in its first week.

Video Acclaim

As soon as T2 was announced, the race was on to tie up the console game. First in line were Nintendo's top developers, Acclaim, who also clinched the crucial *Simpsons* deal. This in itself is not too surprising, although the way the game is being developed is. While most would imagine this American film licensed by an American console publisher to be programmed by an American developer, it will come as quite a shock to find that it is being programmed in

Manchester, England, by software veterans Software Creations (*Bubble Bobble, Bionic Commando*). (It also came as quite a relief as the RAZE budget

wouldn't quite stretch to a trip to the States – Manchester was hard enough.)

The *Terminator 2* team are Steve Ruddy, Geoff Follin and Tony Anderson, and they started the project over six months ago from just a few photos of scenes in the film. Strangely enough, the first element to be completed was the music, which is completely opposite to the way that films are usually done. With the moody music setting the atmosphere, the programmer and graphics artist,

Steve and Tony, were all set to design a seven-level game that took you through the main action scenes of the film.

You start off in a biker's bar, before moving into the storm drains and onto the finale at the steel works. All the time, you are in control of Schwarzenegger as he battles to save John and Sarah Conner from the unwelcome attentions of the machines' terminator, the T1000.

All the main characters are featured, with each sprite's anima-

LLNESS

tion taking around two days to design. Between the levels there are some marvellous digitised pictures to tie the whole plot together and make it feel like a real film. The pictures also come with story text, although this may be changed by Nintendo due to their strict editing policy (this could include words like "h*stage" and "k*ll").

The game is practically finished now, and taking into account the Nintendo approval time, should be out in America for October. The UK release is expected a few months after, and hopefully before Christmas. The film Terminator 2 opened on August 16, and shouldn't be missed by any self-respecting action film fan.

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Aero Blasters	£37.00	Darwin 4081	£23.00	Mickey Mouse	£33.00
Air Buster (USA)	£35.00	Golden Axe	£35.00	Midnight Resistance	£38.00
Alien Storm	£37.00	Granada X	£22.00	Shadow Dancer	£23.00
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★ Super Famicom ★ Super Famicom ★ Super Famicom ★ Super Famicom ★
Games FROM £35....Games FROM £35...Games FROM £35...Games FROM £35

ActRaiser	£45.00	Pilot Wings	£45.00
Big Run	£50.00	Super Baseball	£50.00
F Zero	£50.00	Super Mario World	£35.00
Final Fight	£45.00	Super R Type 2	£55.00
Gradius III	£45.00	Ultraman	£45.00

★ Consoles ★ Consoles ★ Consoles ★ Consoles ★ Consoles ★ Consoles ★ Consoles ★

Mega Drive System	£133.00	Nintendo Super Famicom (NES)	£275.00
Nintendo Game Boy	£67.00	PC Engine GT	£250.00

★ Stop Press ★ Stop Press ★ Stop Press ★ Stop Press ★ Stop Press ★ Stop Press ★

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AFTERBURNER II	20.00	15.00
ARNOLD PALMER GOLF	15.00	10.00
ATOMIC ROBOKID	15.00	10.00

SECOND HAND TITLE	SELL	BUY
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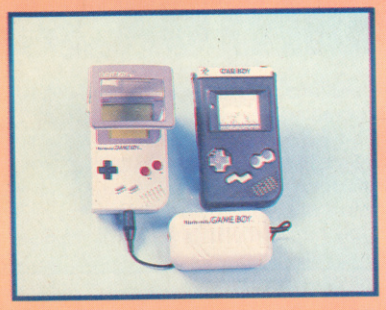

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BIG IN

Brought to you direct from our man on the hot spot, Shintaro Kanaoya, exclusive details of Sega's forthcoming Mega-CD, the NEC laptop PC Engine and all the biggest software releases for all the major consoles.

SUPER FAMICOM RELEASES

● *Area 88* – an adaptation of a comic book of all things. And a jolly violent one by the looks of things as you have to pilot a fighter jet and embark on numerous sorties. It's a sideways shoot-'em-up with plenty of pick ups, end-of-level tough nuts and explosive action throughout.

● *Battle Dodgeball* – a cute sports game in which the players are caricatures of Japanese super heroes. Basically, you play dodgeball with robots and monsters the size of Smurfs. There are power ups and a choice of eight teams.

● *Hyper Zone* – looks like *F-Zero*, but played in space rather than on the ground. You also have a very useful front cannon for wasting anything that won't get out of your way.

● *Castlevania* – a conversion of the excellent NES game of the same name. The graphics have improved significantly and the whip can now be used to swing on (like in the *Indiana Jones* games).

● *F1* – this is just a working title for an overhead two-player simultaneous racing game. You can tune the car and add bits and pieces to it. This looks like being some time away; especially as they haven't even decided on a game name yet.

WRESTLEMANIA LIVES

Fire Wrestling 2 on the PC Engine comes out late in August. The original was terrific (once you'd learnt the initially complex techniques); the sequel promises even greater things. The graphics are certainly better; software house Human have taken out a lot of the old wrestlers and replaced them with meatier looking ones. Also, moves appear to be more authentic. And yes, you can still make the opposition bleed.

INSIGHTS INTO CD

Further to the comprehensive – and exclusive – coverage we've given Sega's forthcoming CD-ROM drive, here are some extra tasty titbits for you to tempt your tongue with.

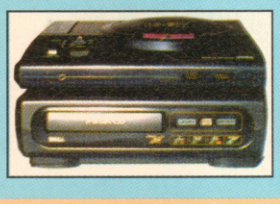
A 12.5MHz 68000 processor is included inside the Mega-CD CD-ROM drive for looking after the machine's spectacular near FMV (full motion video) capabilities. Much has been written about the CD-ROM's FMV capabilities. Little of it accurate. Effectively the drive can read graphic information from CD-ROMs and display the quality images onscreen at a rate of 15 frames a second. These images are independent of anything the Mega Drive can generate. Hence, you could have stunning background graphics and standard Mega Drive-generated sprites zooming around the screen. The possibilities are amazing.

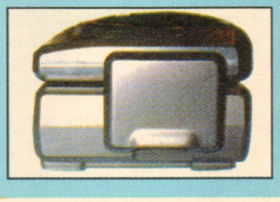
There are 21 games scheduled for imminent release on the Mega-CD. These include *Sim Earth*, *Ernest Evans*, *Lunar – The Silver Star* (shown above) and one called *Super Girl's Panic*.

The Mega-CD comes with 768K of screen RAM, 64K of PCM sound memory, 16K of data cash and 8K of RAM for saved game information. A 128K ROM is also included in the system.

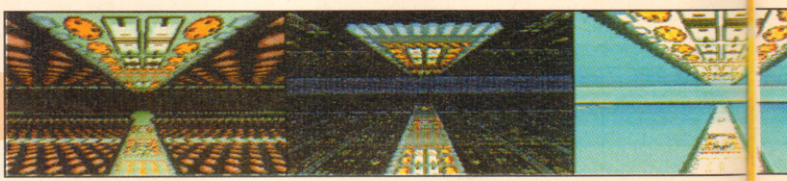
As the Mega-CD has its own processor and memory, it will be able to execute programs simultaneously with the Mega Drive. The combined output of both units can be sent to screen and speaker. The results should be superb audio visual games.

Price for the Mega-CD is being quoted as ¥50,000 (around £220). However, you're going to have to wait until next year for official UK prices.





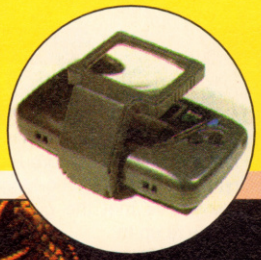
Scenes from the soon-to-be-released in-space racing game *Hyper Zone* on the Super Famicom. From left to right the levels Bio Plant, Neo Megalopolis, Ripple Field and Grass Land.



JAPAN

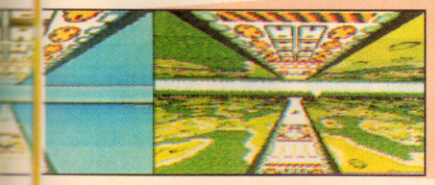
EYE SEE

If you find the Sega Game Gear's screen just a little too small for comfort, you might be interested in this bolt-on magnifying glass from a third party Japanese manufacturer. Release dates and price are still under wraps – however, you'll be first to know...



GOLDEN OLDIE RETURNS

One of the first and best games to appear on the mighty Mega Drive is about to be sequelised. Keep some room in your Christmas stocking this year for the December release of *Golden Axe II*. Featuring the fearless triad Tiris Flare, Ax Battler and Gilius Thunderhead, *Golden Axe II* can be played by one or two players. The same 3-D perspective will be used in the follow up, although tougher opponents and more levels are promised.



PC ENGINE TOP TEN (JAPAN)

1. Ultrabox 4
2. World Stadium 91
3. Columns
4. Super Momotaroh Dentetsu
5. Populous
6. Y's 1.2
7. Bomber Man
8. Shubibinman
9. Cosmic Fantasy 2
10. F-1 Circus

MEGA DRIVE TOP TEN (JAPAN)

1. Bonanza Brothers
2. Langlisser
3. Sungokushi
4. Strider
5. Super Monaco GP
6. Midnight Resistance
7. Verytex
8. Shadow Dancer
9. Aeroblasters
10. Super Volley Ball

PC ENGINE LAPTOP ARRIVES

Exclusive news once again on the NEC PC Engine front. The laptop PC Engine has arrived. Naturally it has a fabulous state-of-the-art active matrix LCD screen and built in joypad. Furthermore, it can be slotted into the old style CD-ROM unit. No price or release date as yet, but stay tuned. Incidentally, *Far East of Eden 2, Populous: The Promised Lands, Shadow of the Beast, LOOM, Wizardry* and *Forgotten Worlds* are all coming out for the new CD-ROM systems mentioned last month in Nec Knacks.

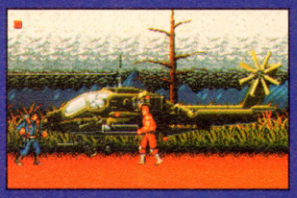
SUPER FAMICOM TOP TEN (JAPAN)

1. Sim City
2. Super Mario World
3. Super Professional Baseball
4. Final Fight
5. Ultraman
6. F-Zero
7. Gadurin
8. Gradius 3
9. Populous
10. Drakkhen

MEGA DRIVE RELEASES

● *Galaxy Force 2* – what can one say? It's old and tired, but a damn fine shoot-'em-up any way. Featuring all the best bits from the arcade game of the same name, this certainly looks like one of the most promising blasters for a long while.

● *Out Run* – it's taken a long time to arrive, but at last you'll get the chance to play this smash Sega coin-op conversion in your home. Apparently *Out Run* is one of the best translations of a coin-op so far. It's an exact copy of the original right down to the music and graphics.



● *Thunder Fox* – a combination beat-'em-up and shoot-'em-up. You start kicking enemy soldiers with your fists and feet and gradually progress to flame throwers and bazookas.

● *Dinoland* – the first Mega Drive pinball game, and probably the first pinball game ever to use dinosaurs as its theme. Should be out just before that other great pinball simulation, *Devil Crash*.

● *Wonderboy 5: Monster World 3* – yes, it's getting very silly and the saga looks set never to end.

● *Shadow of the Beast* – the first Mega Drive game to come from Liverpool-based Psygnosis. Coded by Rob Povey of Atari ST Quartet fame, the game is similar to the 16-bit computer versions. However, say Psygnosis, rather than just looking and sounding good, the game has features decent playability.

entertainment USA

Forget the Hawk, catch the Toads

Game Boy

Before I reveal the butt-kicking phenomenon behind this game, I must warned you that both the Game Boy and NES versions of Tradewest's *Battletoads* won't be available in the UK till spring 1992. This is worth considering because what I am about to review will be one of those rare games that will capture the hearts and minds of a whole nation – well, it certainly went down a storm in the States.

In the US, the Battletoads are to Nintendo what Christian Slater is to film. These greenbacks are the coolest, raddest, most laidback creatures to ever appear on the streets. Put simply, these guys make the Turtles look like pond scum.

The Battletoads are Zitz, Rash and Pimple. Their mentor is some chap called Professor T Bird. Zitz is the smartest of the trio, and the team's natural leader; Rash, though, prefers to be known as the coolest toad this side of the Mazalian Cluster; while Pimple is undoubtedly the biggest toad, with his muscles making up for his lack of intellect.

On the side of the baddies is the Toads' evil nemesis The Dark Queen. Dressed in tight black leather and possessing stunning beauty, she flaunts her body to reach her ultimate aim of destroying our heroes and ruling the universe. This is one bitch who deserves to die. The Dark Queen's main sidekicks are Big Blag, General Vermin and Robo-Manus.

Now you've met the guys, here's what they're up to.

While partying on Los Vegas, a deep space leisure station, the three Toads get pleasantly side-tracked by a voluptuous Thalian Thorax Dancer. Unfortunately, the dancer isn't quite what she seems, and soon reveals herself as the evil Dark Queen. Within minutes her minions descended the dance floor and kidnapped Rash and Pimple; only the clever one, Zitz, escaped. Luckily, he managed to crawl to the Toadster and guide it back to the Toads' spaceship, the Vulture. Meanwhile, Professor T Bird has been tracking the Dark Queen's ship, the Gargantua, back to her home planet of Armagedda. As soon as Zitz arrives, the Prof turns the ship around in pursuit of Queenie.

Professor Bird sets you down on the planet, hands you your can of fly food, and wishes you luck. From now on, you're on your own.

Firstly, you'll find yourself wandering through the hills and caverns of Armagedda. Here you'll encounter the first of the bitch's bad guys, the Psyko Pigs. These swines come chopping for your head, so duck out of the way and hit them with one of your teeth-smashing punches. Soon they'll be pork scratchings and you'll be able to pick up their axes to use against the rest of the level's inhabitants. At the end of the first level, you'll find General Slaughter, a horned heavyweight with a penchant for green amphibians.

Level two takes you to the skies for some more kick-ass action. In your ship you fly through the skies of Armagedda encountering all types of weird creatures – including what look like ducks! After disposing of a massive dirty rat at the end of your flight, you land in the midst of a forest, full of swamps to jump over and vines to swing on. Bat-Rat lies in the middle of this level protecting the dreaded Wurm the lies beyond it. After going through the belly of the Wurm you face the terrible, the towering, the truly toad-splatting Robo-Manus mutant.

Almost every element of *Battletoads* is impressive. As soon as you turn on the Boy and the wild music blasts out of the little speaker, you know you're in for a real gaming experience. This sort of superb presentation is continued into the game where you get a myriad of wonderful tunes, and levels interspersed with tens of cartoon pictures and story text.

The gameplay itself is sheer beat-'em-up madness. Those who have seen *Final Fight* will have some idea of what to expect. Zitz comes with ten different moves, which can combine to produce some stunning fight sequences. For instance, you could start on your enemy with a Kiss-My-Fist, then loosen them up with a Jawbuster. Follow that with an Anvil Slam and you should have weakened them enough to boot them off the mountain crevasse with a Bigfoot.

The glowing list of excellent features could go on and on. I could tell you about the zillion frames of animation, the mega-detailed backdrops, the stereo sound effects, but it would take up the 36 pages (!) that US mag *Nintendo Power* devoted to it in their June issue.

As far as UK Game Boy owners are concerned though, there's only one problem with *Battletoads* – and that's that you can't get it officially till next spring. There has never been a better time to go on vacation to the States – see ya in the fall...

OVERALL 94%

BATTLETOADS

It's more difficult to get into America than Russia.

8-BIT SUPER PLUG

Nintendo have announced that there is nothing to stop someone bringing out an 8-bit adapter for the Super NES. Apparently, all the normal NES hardware is in there, so it's just a case of doing a small convertor to allow the 72-pin carts to plug into the 62-pin SNES slot. The only reason this wasn't included in the original unit was due to the extra cost involved. It is highly likely that Nintendo themselves will come out with an adapter soon.

CATCH THE HAWK

The Hawkster is currently in the polishing stages of production. Yep, even though Hudson Hawk the film got completely panned over here, Nintendo are releasing a great console tie-in. The game's being developed on Britain's own fair shores at Special FX in Liverpool and roughly follows the film storyline.

You start off in New York as the city's top cat burglar who's just been released from jail. Before long, you are forced back into the world of crime and have to steal a painting from a museum. Your employers then force you to go to Italy (in a coffin) where you must steal from the Vatican.

All the action is viewed from the side in an arcade adventure format. The backgrounds are fairly representative of the film locations, and the Hawk himself is quite a little character, swinging, sliding and jumping around the buildings.

Catch the Hawk when he appears in the US this autumn, or in the UK late next year.

BIG BITS BLUFF

If you think eight megabit *Mickey Mouse* is 16 times the size of a normal 512K Amiga/ST game, then you've been conned by the most underhand sales con since Saddam Hussein commissioned the Supergun. Just what exactly is an eight megabit cart?

Well, if truth be told, it's not quite what the software houses would have you believe. An eight megabit cart, like most released on the Mega Drive, is actually only 1024K or one megabyte. The transition from talking in megabytes to megabits was made without any explanation from the American software houses, who now try to make games sound larger by the change of a few letters. Therefore, the "four meg blockbuster" *Stormlord* on the Mega Drive is 512K, the same as the original Amiga version. When it comes to carts think of bits not bytes (which are eight bits). Here's the conversion table for those of you who feel conned by the great software swindle.

1 megabit = 128K
2 megabit = 256K
4 megabit = 512K
6 megabit = 768K
8 megabit = 1Mb
12 megabit = 1.5Mb

CARTOON MADNESS

This month, it crossed my mind that cartoon tie-ins are like sausage-jocks (UK read taxi-drivers); you wait ages for them to appear, then along come five in a row! For instance, this month we have *The Little Mermaid, Spider-Man, Fantasia, Wolverine* and *Tom & Jerry*.

There are few youngsters, or indeed old cavemen like myself, who haven't heard of The Little Mermaid. It started out life as a faerytale by Hans Christian Anderson, and was popularised by Disney with a feature-length film. The game, too, features Disney animation of the highest quality. All the action takes place below sea-level, where you control Ariel as she swims around trying to kill all the bad fish. It seems the fish are under the spell of the evil Ursula who plans to take over all the oceans of the world. This NES cart comes from Capcom, and is their first in collaboration with Disney.

Staying with Disney, there's the Mega Drive version of *Fantasia*. With *Mickey Mouse* already one of the most popular games on the Genesis, the arrival of this cart was eagerly awaited – and rightly so! The film Fantasia is recognised in Hollywood for doing more for cartoon animation than any other film. As you can imagine, with Disney behind the scenes, the Genesis cart is a wonder to behold. Don't miss it - superb!

Spider-Man appears on both the Master System and Genesis this month. Both versions run along the same lines, with Spidey travelling across seven levels in search of Kingpin who is holding New York to ransom. The animation is the 16-bit version will make *Mickey Mouse* fans double-take, for this is another visual spectacular. The way old Spidey's moves have been faithfully reproduced is truly awesome and makes this a cart that every Sega owner should have.

Tom and Jerry are undoubtedly the most devious cartoon duo to appear on the small screen – and now they're on the NES. This one-player game has Jerry searching for his little pal Tuffy, who's been locked somewhere in the basement. And who put him there? Why none other than our old friend Tom, who is watching every room in the house to make sure Jerry doesn't get him. Looks good, and should be out in September.

Finally in this cornucopia of cartoon craziness, we meet Wolverine, star of Marvel Comics' X-Men series, who appears on Nintendo next month. The eponymous star can still call upon all his old mates – Cyclops, Longshot, Storm and The Beast – who can help him clean up the streets of America.

That's all, folks...

STATES TALK

★ If you thought the release dates between the US/Japan and the UK were bad, then get a load of this. ASCII Entertainment in America have just released *Faria*. This mediocre RPG was released in Japan over seven years ago, and now it's coming out in the US! Jeez, who knows when, or if, the UK launch will be.

★ If you thought Konami's four-player *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* arcade machine was cool, then how d'ya fancy a six-player coin-op? Yep, no kidding, Konami already have a machine in development and hope to unveil it before the end of the year.

★ Staying with Konami, they are hoping to have a Super NES version of their *Turtles* arcade machine in the first quarter of 1992. This should coincide with the release of *TMHT 2* on the NES in the UK, which runs along a similar format.

★ Anyone remember Jon Ritman/Ocean's version of *Batman*? Well, Game Boy owners all over America are now diving into Imagesoft's *Altered Space*, which runs in the same isometric 3-D environment. The graphics are quite stunning for the little Boy, showing some amazing detail on the backgrounds and pick-ups.

★ After being kicked out of the official Nintendo Super NES CD-ROM party, Sony are to strike back with the Sony Play Station. The unit will comprise a Super NES and CD-ROM in one unit. However, it is thought to be incompatible with the official unit planned by Nintendo-/Philips, but will come out before the end of 1991.

★ The official release date for the Super NES is September 1. Launch price for the machine (which bundles *Mario 4*) is $199.95 (around £120). Predicting this launch, NEC have dropped the price of the TurboGrafx-16 from $159.95 to $99.95 (around £60). Nintendo expect big sales, predicting two million units sold before 1992!

You can fly to New York for just £200.

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NINTENDO E.S.
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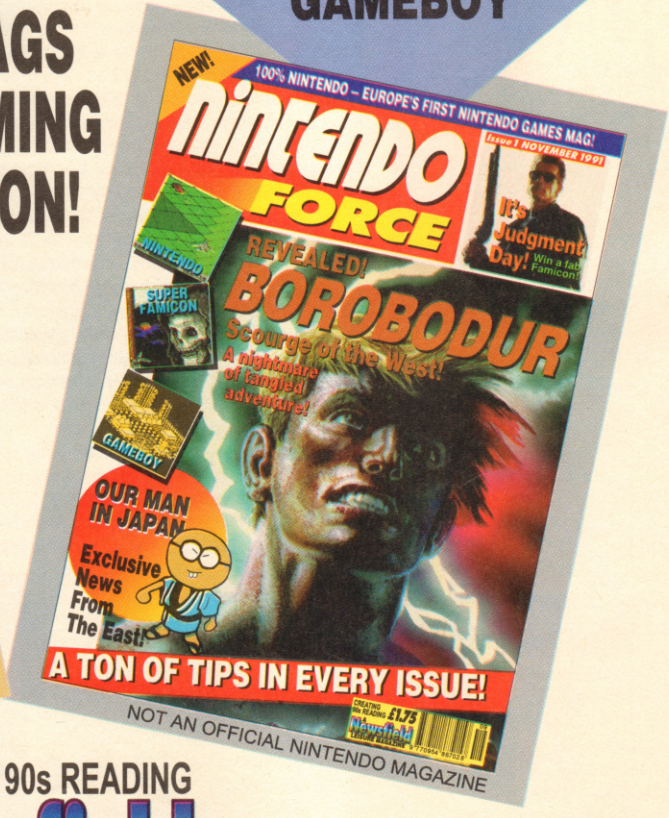

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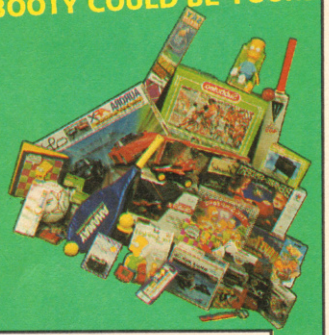

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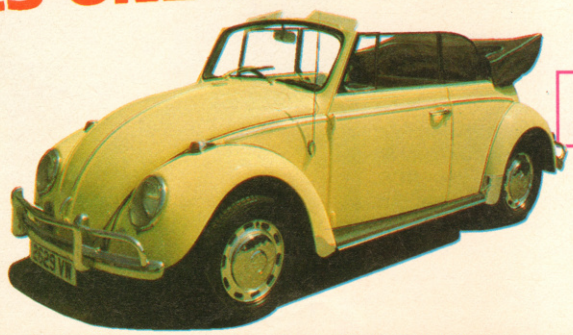

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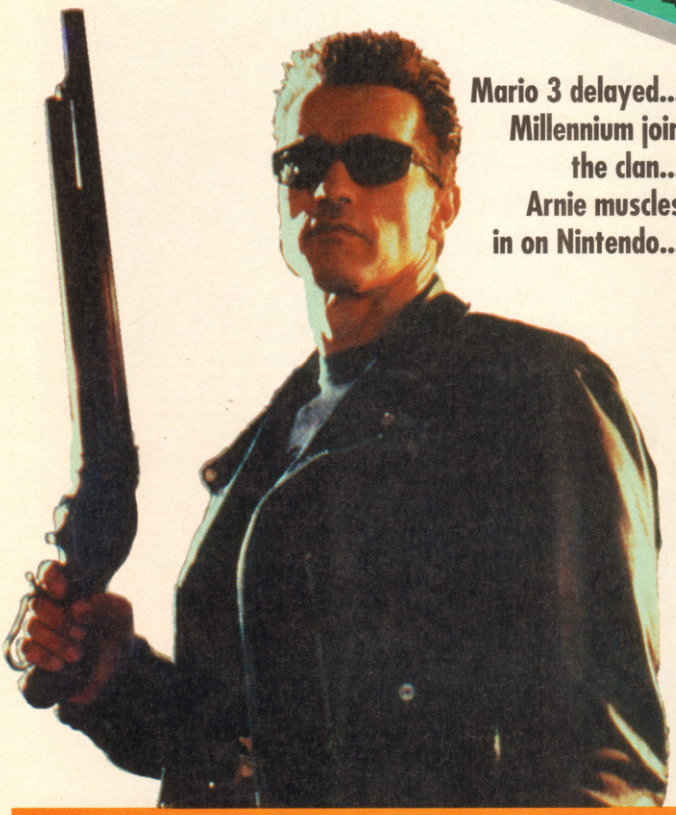


Mario 3 delayed... Millennium join the clan... Arnie muscles in on Nintendo...

MORE NINTENDO ACCLAIM

Acclaim, who were behind *The Simpsons*, now have their UK office up and running, and going full steam ahead towards Christmas. The creation of their UK office means two things for Nintendo owners over here: (1) American publishers are starting to realise the massive potential of the UK market; (2) the delay between games being released in the States and in the UK will significantly reduce.

Acclaim have loads of great titles lined up for release over the next couple of months. By the end of September, you should be able to buy *WWF Wrestling* and *Swords & Scorcery* on the NES. Unfortunately, *The Simpsons* has been held back till October, but this is to coincide with the Game Boy version, subtitled *Bart Goes to Camp Deadly*, which should be finished by then. Also in October there's *Arch Rivals* on NES and *WWF* on Game Boy. November sees *Double Dragon II* and *NBA* (basketball) on Game Boy. Following swiftly on from that in December is their potential Christmas hit *Terminator 2*. (Incidentally, thanks to the guys at Acclaim for organising the super preview of the film in July!)

BEST OF THE BEST

Are you among the best of the best? Can you score a cool ten million on *Mario 2*? If so, then you're just the person we're looking for. Send in your scores for any NES, Game Boy and Super Famicom game (along with a photo if poss), and you could feature in next month's Best of the Best high scores table. To make sure entries are legit, we may ring you up to ask you how to get through the game, so no fibbing! Entries to *Best of the Best, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.*

NUTS! NUTS! NUTS!

Nintendo owners are certainly the nuttiest bunch around. This month someone has sent in a mind-blowing picture of such artful quality and flare that it couldn't go unprinted. If you thought this picture of feet was

bad, you should have smelled the socks that were sent with it! The culprit is mad Game Boy owner, Glen Scott of Great Yarmouth.

If you've got a similarly stupid (or embarrassing) photo, send it in to *Nutty Nintendo Owners, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.*

NESSY IN THE POND

If you're a keen gamesplayer, then you can't have failed to have heard of Millennium. They've already had tremendous success with *James Pond* and *Stormball* on 16-bit computers, and now they plan to do similar on the NES. Millennium have just been given the go-ahead to develop on Nintendo, and hope that they'll also be able to publish their own stuff in the UK. Two unrevealed titles are already in development.

MARIO WARPED BACK

Phew, it certainly has been busy around here lately. After collapsing in a heap after many late nights/early mornings compiling *The Simpsons* playing guide for this issue, who should arrive on the RAZE doorstep but Mario holding his third game in his hand. As this month's preview shows (see page 26), this is undoubtedly his best game yet. But just as we'd finished the preview, we received information that Bandai – Nintendo's UK distributors – had decided to hold back the release of *Super Mario Bros 3* till mid-October/early November! Apparently, it wasn't till they received 100,000 advance orders that Bandai released the marketing potential for this third *Mario* game. Now they are putting together a massive ad campaign, including big TV spots, to cash in. (With 100,000 orders already, you would have thought they could get away without any advertising at all!)

The water at the Niagra Falls is warmer at the bottom than the top.

GLOBAL NINTENDO

Nintendo's arms stretch far and wide, and here's a couple of letters to prove it.

Niklas Berg from Skelleftea in Sweden sent in loads of tips and these queries. He wants to know the address of Club Nintendo and where to get hold of games.

Contact: *Club Nintendo, PO Box 104, Fareham, Hants PO16 8UR*. At present, membership is free and you get a great bimonthly magazine packed with all the latest Nintendo news, plus free access to the Hotline and Helpline.

Games Tips Hotline:
(0329) 822662
(12pm-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat)
Games News Helpline:
(0626) 65500

Official Euro carts for the NES and Game Boy should be available in Sweden. However, if you want US carts (for which you'll need an adaptor!) or any of the UK games, take a look through the adverts in the pages of RAZE.

On a lighter note, Darpan Thakur wrote from India to tell us that RAZE costs a lot out there and he has to spend all his pocket money just to get each month's issue. What dedication.

NES TOP TEN (UK)

1. Nintendo World Cup
2. Super Mario Bros 2
3. Mega Man 2
4. Gremlins 2
5. Double Dragon
6. Tennis
7. Gauntlet 2
8. Tecmo World Wrestling
9. Mick Tyson's Punch Out
10. Duck Tales

GAME BOY TOP FIVE (UK)

1. Super Mario Land
2. Double Dragon
3. Spider-Man
4. Gargoyle's Quest
5. Fortress of Fear

DIXONS' SUPER NES

Good news for any potential Nintendo owners. Dixons have compiled an exclusive new bundle that is bound to whet your appetite. Called the Super Set, you get the NES control deck, the Four Score junction box, four control pads, *Nintendo World Cup*, *Tetris* and *Super Mario Bros*. All this for the paltry sum of £139.99. Now if that doesn't convince you to buy an NES, I don't know what will.

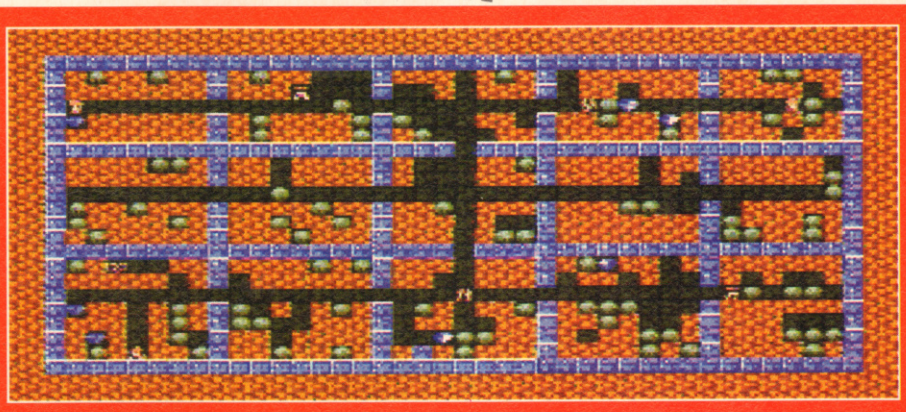
WIN A GAME BOY!

Want to get your hands on the world's best-selling hand-held? Well, we've got a super little Game Boy to give away absolutely free. If you've already got one, then just imagine the fun (not to mention convenience) of having another Boy in the family. Just answer this simple question and we'll throw your entry into the hat on September 26, the closing date. Entries should be sent to *Me and My Boy, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH*. Who is the central character in *Boulderdash*?

a) Pickford b) Rockford c) Ford Fairlane

RAZE COMPETITION

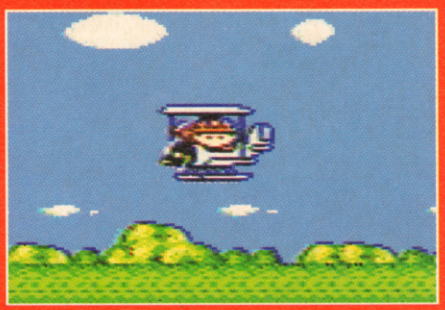
UTTER BOULDERDASH!



Now for a couple of sneak previews of upcoming official releases for the NES.

BOULDERDASH

First off the starting blocks is *Boulderdash*, a classic arcade puzzle game that originally appeared on the C64 in 1984. It revolves around an enigmatic character called

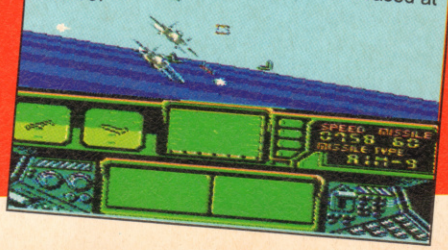


Rockford who has to burrow through soil in search of diamonds. Also in the soil are large rocks which can be displaced and subsequently squash poor Rockford. All this action is against the clock, so a quick brain will be needed to work out a way around the 20+ levels without bringing the whole landscape down upon you. Later levels include extra problems like an amoeba which has to be turned into diamonds and deadly butterflies which try to block your path.

The emphasis here is on gameplay, although graphics and sound are faithful to the original. *Boulderdash* is still one of the most addictive and frenetic games around. Don't miss the review in next month's issue. You should be able to get it now for £24.99.

TOP GUN

Fans of the old shoot-'em-up *Top Gun* will be over the moon to hear news of a sequel. Yes, more flying through the air shooting down MiGs will be coming in *Top Gun 2*. In fact the game is remarkably similar to the original in all areas – although it's quite a bit harder. You've just two weeks to get those Tom Cruise haircuts before the game's released at £39.99.



In 1975, chickens were employed for traffic control in a park in Melbourne.

sega CITY...

Storms are brewing in the Sega City this month; one on the console and one in the video shops

CITY SLICKERS

Troubled by your top scoring talent? Embarrassed to play games in front of your friends for fear of showing them up? Keep crashing games because your play is too good? Do your friends start to put "Z"s in your name: Dazza, Gazza, Jazza, Pazza, Wozza, Rozza, Bozza? If so, then we've got just the section for you. Starting next month is City Slickers, the place where all Sega owners can boast about the size of their scores. If you've hit high on your Master System, trounced trillions on your Mega Drive or splatted thousands on your Game Gear, send in your amazing feat to *City Slickers, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.*

PS: Don't cheat, because we may contact you and ask you how you achieved your gargantuan score.

SEGA STORMFRONT

After the demise of Hewson, it's great to see that the company that bought all Hewson's assets (but not their debts!), 21st Century Entertainment, has decided to keep all their console projects in development going. This means that Rafaelle Cecco's *Stormlord*, which was planned for conversion to the Mega Drive way back at Christmas 1990, will still be coming out in the UK in October.

When the excellent fantasy romp was originally converted from 8-bit to 16-bit, it was praised for utilising the full capabilities of the 16-bit machine and not just being another port. The Mega Drive version has had the same sort of extra attention to detail, boasting over 400K of high definition graphics, nine-channel stereo sound(!) and ten levels of medieval meandering. We've only had the finished version in for a couple of days, but it plays much harder than the original. Expect a full review next issue.

SMITH WANTS SEGA

If you pop down to your local WH Smith, you should now be able to purchase the full complement of Sega hardware and software. The company ceased stocking computer hardware in 1989 because they complained it was just too unreliable. However, the growing market and reliability of consoles seems to have changed their minds. If the WH Smith test takes off, look forward to seeing more consoles on the high street.

SIZZLERS SOON...

Okay, for those of you who've been holidaying on the moon for the past two months, here's what you've missed...

On the Mega Drive side, June saw the release of just one title: *Sonic the Hedgehog*. Following that in July was a bucketload from Electronic Arts, including *Faery Tale Adventure, Block Out, King's Bounty* and *Centurion*. Over the next few months Sega promise us *Alien Storm, Flicky, Fantasia (Mickey Mouse 2), 688 Attack Sub, Abrams Battle Tank, Wrestlewar, Spider-Man, Bonanza Bros, Phantasy Star 3, Streets of Rage, The Immortal, Road Rash* and *NHL Hockey*.

On the Master System there was the re-incarnation of Pac-Man in the form of *Pac-Mania* from Tecmagik. There was also the disappointing *Summer Games, Dynamite Duke* and that mega-violent space blast *Forgotten Worlds*. Coming soon are *Fantasia, Spider-Man*, the delayed *Speedball, Strider, Chess, Back to the Future 2*, cartoon classic *The Flintstones* and Taito's *Bubble Bobble*.

SADDLE RASH

Arriving on the Mega Drive in September will be the conversion of the superb coin-op *Road Rash*. It involves you, a high-powered motorcycle and no rules whatsoever! You race across public highways, but it doesn't mean you have to stick to the road. 14 other riders are also competing for the high prize money. You can dispose of them with a good punch, kick, bullet, or anything that will immobilise them for a few moments. But watch out for the speed traps as they sap money which could be spent on add-ons for your bike. Races take place in five different locations: Grass Valley, Palm Desert, Pacific Coast, Sierra Nevada and Redwood Forest. After seeing a pre-production version of the game, we feel that this could be one of the big hits of the year.

It is possible to mix water and oil...

STARS IN THEIR EYES

Sega's PR department has been working overtime for the past few months, ensuring the whole nation knows about Sega in time for Christmas. Here are just three media occurrences that we've seen. If you've spotted any more Sega machines slyly creeping into the media, then send in the details to the usual address.

(1) After extensive advertising on MTV over the past few months, Sega have now linked up with the mega music channel to co-sponsor a competition that will take two people on an expenses-paid trip to the MTV Awards in California.

(2) Check out the August issue of The Face. Turn to page 62 and you'll find one of those arty black and white fashion photographs of a male model playing with a Game Gear – weird!

(3) Readers of the August issue of Sky magazine can't fail to have noticed a massive picture of Sonic in their Global section. Although the picture was listed under the Japan heading, I'm sure the UK office had more than a hand in the Mario-bashing article that accompanied it.

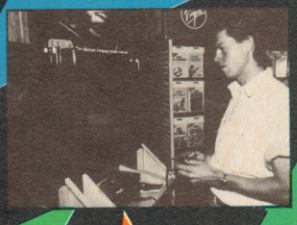
Sega's public relations manager, Lesley Walker, has also been seen mingling with the stars over the summer. We first spotted her sharing a cucumber sandwich and reminiscing about the good ol' days with England cricket captain, Graham Gooch, on the eve of the second test against the West Indies. Judging be the torrential down-pour that followed, Goochie will have been glad of a Game Gear to take away the boredom of waiting for the sun to appear. Let's hope this doesn't mean there's a cricket game coming on the Game Gear.

Graham Gooch receiving the much-coveted Game Gear from Virgin super PR woman Lesley "Omnipresent" Walker.

But before we could put down our cameras and notepads to join them in a fairy cake, Lesley was off down the road to Wimbledon. When we finally caught up with her, she was sharing a Robinsons' Barley Water and reminiscing about the good ol' days of English tennis with Stefan Edberg, international superstar (almost). Unfortunately, as I'm sure the sporting Sega fan mentioned to Lesley, there are no tennis games on the Mega Drive, which is probably why Stefan is pictured here playing *Super Monaco GP*. (This also explains the fact that when the rain started to poor, Agassi was spotted honing his tennis strokes on a Game Boy!)

But Nintendo can no longer claim to be the console of the stars as Sega now have a few famous followers of their own: Boris Becker (loser), Jonathan Ross (also has Game Boy), Jazzie B (old news), David Bowie (big girl's blouse) and Steve Wright (in the afternoon) all have some Sega kit.

If you've spotted anyone famous sneekily play a Sega machine, send in a picture to us and you'll receive a piece of software.



"Anyone for tennis?" says Stefan Edberg after finding little joy in any of the Mega Drive games.

MASTER SYSTEM TOP TEN (UK)

1. Mickey Mouse
2. Golden Axe
3. Dick Tracy
4. Ninja
5. World Soccer
6. Moonwalker
7. Gauntlet
8. Wonder Boy 3
9. Indiana Jones
10. Paperboy

SONIC ROCKETS

Within the first few weeks of its release, *Sonic the Hedgehog* shot straight up to number one in the all-formats, full-price top 20 chart. This simply means that Sonic sold more units than any other full-price game in the land, a feat that has never been achieved by a console game before now. Congratulations, Sega!

MEGA DRIVE TOP TEN (UK)

1. Mickey Mouse
2. Golden Axe
3. The Revenge Of Shinobi
4. PGA Tour Golf
5. Super Monaco GP
6. World Cup Italia '90
7. John Madden's American Football
8. Moonwalker
9. Strider
10. Populous

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

Well you wouldn't be if you were playing *Afterburner 2* in the latest gadget from America's Simulator Technologies. Called The Simulator 1, the controller is derived from a normal chair and totally compatible with all Mega Drive games. In fact, despite the chair bit, this is really just a normal joystick, but with the parts split up over different parts of the chair.

Fire buttons are situated on either arm of the chair. Your feet stretch out in front of you and rest on a bar. Now for the clever bit. The base of the chair is connected to four heavy duty micro-switches on a rubber suspension. By shifting the chair to tilt in eight directions, you can control the movements of the character onscreen. However, there seems to be no accommodation for jumping the chair, which would make a game like Sonic amazing. I guess we'll just have to wait for a home version of the R-360 to get that sort of feeling.

The Simulator 1 really is a smart looking device and one that complements the sleek lines of the Mega Drive perfectly. But now for the bad news: you can only purchase the Simulator 1 in America. Let's hope and pray that Sega pick it up in the UK soon – or at least a few importers try to bring it over. The price is a hefty $189, which equates to just over £100. Expensive yes, but you get a trendy futuristic space chair too!

WIN ARTS CARTS!

To celebrate the forthcoming release of the absolutely fab *Road Rash*, Electronic Arts are giving away an Electronic Arts Mega Drive cart to FIVE lucky RAZE readers. Just take a look at the picture below and think up a suitably stupid caption to accompany it. Pop your caption, name, address and EA cart of your choice on a postcard and send it to *Artful Carts, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH*. Entries that arrive after September 26 will be shoved in the nearest exhaust pipe and blown to bits.

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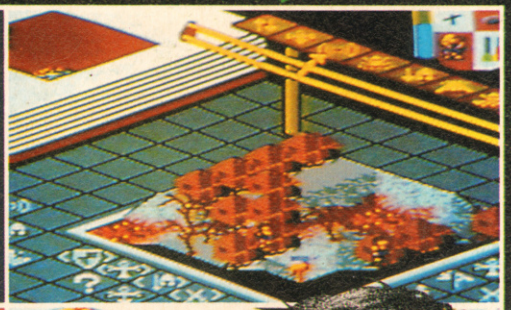

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atari ATTACK

The Lynx is about to get the support it deserves. This month we look at the cornucopia of titles currently in development, and a titillating trio that are already finished

TURBO SUB

Aliens are invading Earth! Only one special craft is capable of following their attack above and below water: the turbo sub. This advanced piece of military hardware is able to zoom through the skies at break-neck speeds and then duck deep below water when it spots an underwater alien base. The format of *Turbo Sub* is similar to the much-acclaimed *Afterburner*, with the first-person view from the cockpit of the flying submarine. Wave after wave of alien intruders zoom from all points on the horizon, eventually creeping up on you to unleash a deadly volley of shots. If things start get to panicky, you can direct the turbo sub beneath the waves for a short moment to avoid them. At the end of a flying stage, you will be forced to follow the alien attack below water into the icy depths of the Atlantic. If you survive another onslaught, you will be taken to the shop where you can buy extra lives and improve your weaponry.

The sub scrolls through the skies and water at a fair lick and a keen eye is needed to blast the aliens as they swoop in from all angles. The added extra of being able to dive into the water at any time adds a new dimension, but the game is basically an old, albeit successful, idea.

OVERALL 73%

ISHIDO

With the excellent Japanese strategy game *Shanghai* already converted to the Lynx, it seems strange to have *Ishido* also released.

Ishido is based around a board of 96 squares, and 36 stones which must be placed upon it. Each stone has its own colour and symbol, and either of these must be matched with a stone already in position on the board.

Sadly the game suffers from poor graphics. I realise that puzzle games don't have to have stunning graphics and jaw dropping animation, but these are poorly defined which makes the symbols hard to distinguish and very eye-straining. There's nothing that this game offers over the strategy of *Shanghai*, so I would recommend *Shanghai* if you really want a portable puzzle game. With such a small number of releases, it is a shame that Atari have allowed two games of practically the same content to appear.

OVERALL 79%

CHEQUERED FLAG

Chequered Flag (or *Checkered Flag* if you prefer) is one of Atari's first racing game – even before *Pole Position*! It's a no-nonsense grand prix car game, but with more than its fair share of sonic touches and all-singing, all-dancing options.

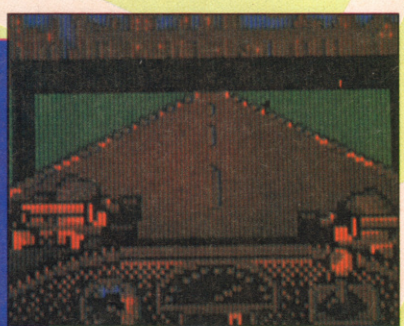
Before you enter the race, you can change things like driver gender, number of laps, car colour, type of race and grid position.

On the track, the view is a combination of your instruments, wing mirrors, etc (as if you were in the car) and your car on the track. The track graphics generally consist of a simple background and a few trees and signs. However, the cars themselves are superbly detailed, with some great animation on spins if you bang into others (or vice-versa!). Racing through the cars is a real challenge as they are also having their own battles, and subsequently can have accidents amongst themselves. The opposition is also very skilled, and you certainly won't be winning any races in your first full season.

To liven up the race action, there are a few extras not normally seen in a car game. For instance, there's some terrific speech (possibly better than *Klax*) at the start of each race telling the drivers to start their engines. Also, when you finish a race, you get treated to a presentation of a trophy. However, if you fail to finish in the top three, you will be hugged and kissed by a member of the same sex!

There is little racing competition on the Lynx for *Chequered Flag*, but I think any race lover will be more than satisfied with this great conversion.

OVERALL 86%



ATARI LYNX TOP TEN (UK)

1. Gauntlet
2. RoadBlasters
3. Klax
4. Slime World
5. Rampage
6. Paperboy
7. Rygar
8. Ms Pac-Man
9. Robo-Squash
10. Gates of Zendocon

HAT-TRICK HASH UP

It was with great embarrassment that we saw the Hat-trick competition cock-up in issue ten. To make amends, we're rerunning the compo this issue. Those who sent in entries (as best they could) for the previous running will automatically be put into the hat for this compo.

To avoid any picture complications for the art people to cock-up, this one is a simple multiple choice affair. Just fill out the form and send it off to *Hat-trick, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.* The prize, as before, is one of six collector's Atari Lynx caps. Les desirables, indeed.

PREVIEW+

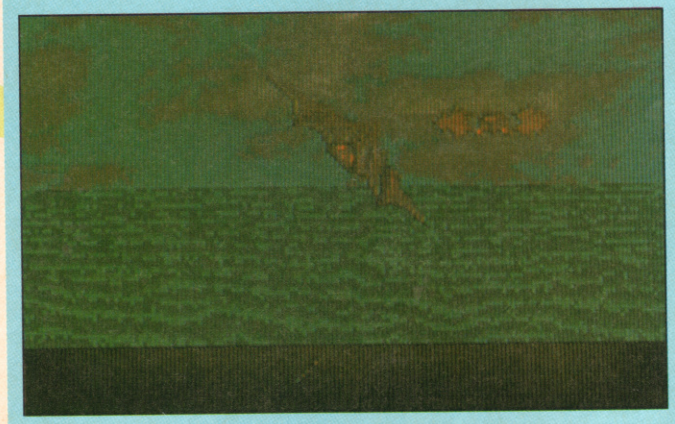
All of these titles are planned for release this year. As present Lynx owners will appreciate, it's hopeless us giving specific release dates as Atari have never hit one yet...

VINDICATORS

You can bet your bottom dollar that if an Atari/Tengen coin-op is out there, a Lynx version is almost certainly on the books. This great two-player hit will be perfect for the ComLynx, adding that all-important multi-player dimension. Through a 3-D environment, you and a pal must infiltrate alien bases and eliminate the controlling leader.

WORLD SOCCER

Based on a somewhat popular sport that involves 22 men kicking a pig's bladder filled with air around a field. The aim is to get the "ball" between your opponent's posts more times than they can do it to you. Personally, I can't see the sport taking off; it involves far too much running around for my liking. The novel use of four-player simultaneous action means this one could sell a few.



VIKING CHILD

Yes, we told you this was coming out on the Lynx way back in issue two when we reviewed the 16-bit versions. Yet it was so long ago even we had forgotten. Traverse platforms and ladders, collect coins, purchase weapons, fight guards, avoid bats, and even rescue a beautiful young princess. Great graphics and the addictive nature of the gameplay should ensure instant success.

XYBOTS

Derived from the 3-D, split screen, arcade maze game. One or two people must travel through a complex and destroy all the robots that are wreaking havoc within it. Collect the money that they leave behind so that you can buy extra weapons and lives in the shop at the end of the level. Another great two-player game.

SCRAP YARD DOG

This originated as an Atari 7800 game. It's one of those cutesy platform games and a beat-'em-up all rolled into one. Judging by the promised adventure elements, this could bring the *Mario*-type gameplay to the Lynx. But just why is it called *Scrap Yard Dog*? Time will tell...

NFL FOOTBALL

Fed up with *World Soccer*? Try your hand at the American version. If the success of *John Madden's* on the Mega Drive is a yardstick, this one could be the portable sports sim of the year. There's hardware zooming, brill sampled speech, a four-player option, and possibly a hot dog dispenser (yet to be confirmed).

STUN RUNNER

A real crowd-puller in the arcades, but not as impressive on computer. It's a futuristic race game that is totally based around a 3-D solid vector environment. Race through a network of tunnels at speeds in excess of 700mph, and if anyone gets in your way then let 'em feel your laser up their exhaust pipe!

CRYSTAL MINES 2

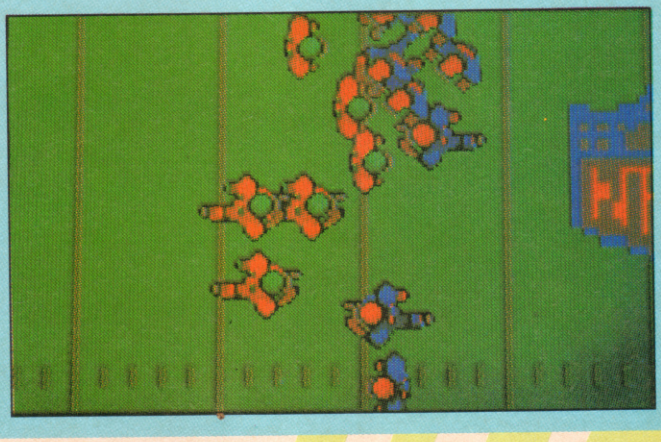
When you have had enough of *Shanghai* and *Ishido*, you can turn your mind to the puzzles of the Crystal Mines. You must guide robots to safety by cutting a path through the rocks that lie in your path. Crystals must also be collected to give extra points and gain access into the next level (there are over 100). This will be the first game to be finished by a third party licensee, Color Dreams.

GEO DUEL

Remember the film Tron? Well another programmer fan of the film is converting the memorable motorbike grid racing scene into a real game. Two-player action as you zoom around the screen leaving a deadly trail behind you. The idea is to surround your opponent with your trail so that they have no option but to smash into it. A great concept, let's hope the game fulfils it.

TOURNAMENT CYBERBALL

The Lynx is turning into a sports fan's ultimate plaything. Here's another field, derived from American football but set in the future. Instead of humans, robots are playing the game and the stakes are far higher. The brutality of the game is increased, which is borne out in such team names as The Thunder, The Crushers and The Lasers.



TOP SCORES

So you think you're good, huh? But just how good are you? How far are you willing to go? Are you good enough to qualify for Top Score? Send your high-flying efforts to *Top Score, RAZE, Newsfield Ltd, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW*. If it is suitably gargantuan then it will be printed. Here's what you are up against...

CALIFORNIA GAMES

BMX
838 Jon Fieldhouse, Kent
SURFING
11875 Jan Kvalen
(40 years old!), Norway
HALFPIPE
30495 Alaister Fairman, Kent
FOOT BAG
121195 Alaister Fairman, Kent

ELECTROCOP

199635 Jon Fieldhouse, Kent

RAMPAGE

2352300 Daniel Tooman,
Bedfordshire

RYGAR

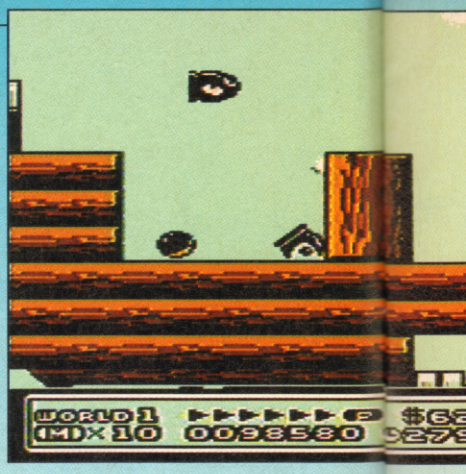
1872300 Alaister Fairman, Kent

QUESTIONS

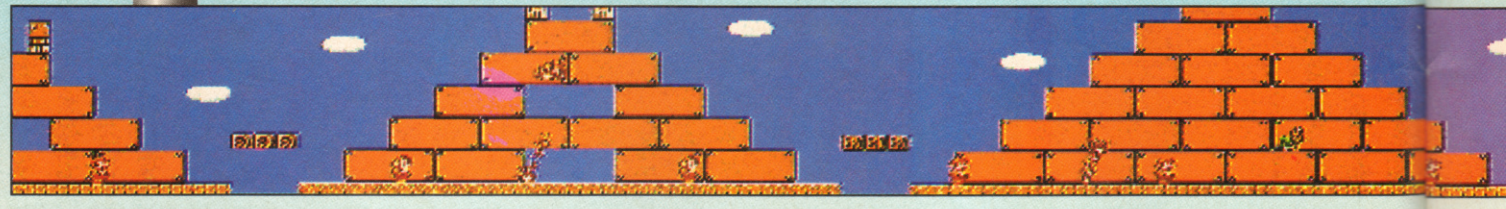
1. **What are the two custom chips inside the Lynx called?**
   a) Bonnie and Clyde
   b) Jack and Vera
   c) Mikey and Suzy
2. **Atari's "Panther" has now been scraped, what is the name of their new super console?**
   a) The Tiger
   b) The Jaguar
   c) The Tabby
3. **What does the word Atari actually mean?**
   a) Watch out, I 'm going to get you on the next go
   b) American Transport And Rail Inc.
   c) Amigas Try And Really Impress

PLAYERS	2
STAGES	8
SKILL LEVELS	1

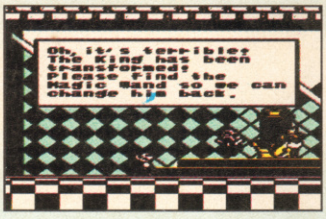
Les Ellis discovers that the Corleones aren't the only Italian family to struck it third time lucky this year



Move over, Sonic, the Mario Bros are back. Sega tried to create their own cult character with only just pushed himself into the limelight, Mario and his lanky brother Luigi have been known and loved throughout the world for the past eight years. It is only when you look at the might of Mario's marketability that you can appreciate what a colossal mountain young Sonic will have to conquer if he is to be crowned king of the console.



the spinning hedgehog, but no-one – no-one! – can match the sheer magnetism of Mario and his entourage of Italian adventurers. While Sonic has

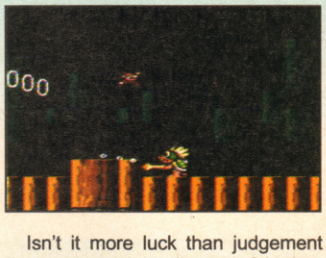


As the Sega fans cry "hypocrites!", because RAZE did give *Sonic* a mighty 95% last issue, let me first ask *Sonic* fans few questions.

Haven't you found that level one contains loads of secret rings, jumps, underground caverns, etc, while the other stages contain next to nothing in comparison?

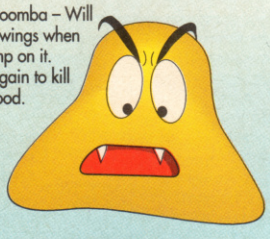
Don't you find *Sonic* a bit easy?

Wouldn't a two-player game add a bit more fun?

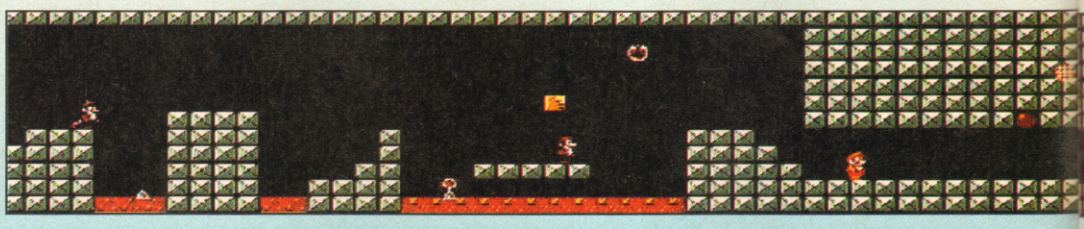


Isn't it more luck than judgement that gets you through most of the levels?

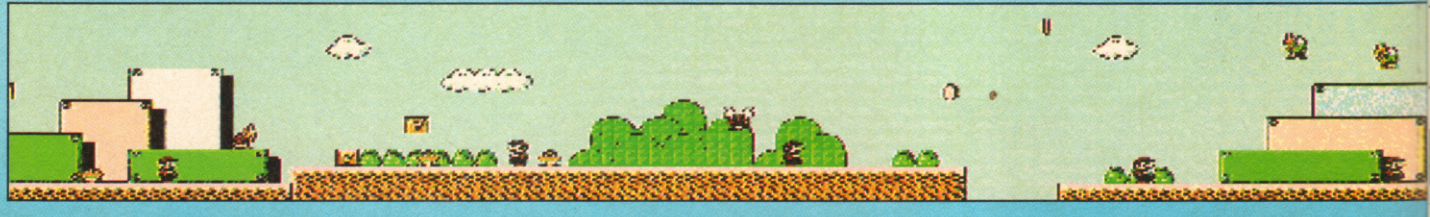
While at least one, if not all, of

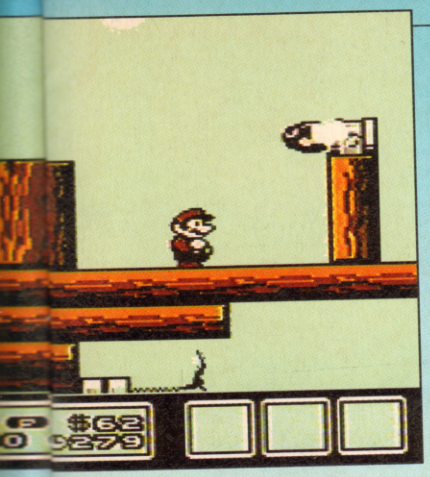


Para-Goomba – Will lose its wings when you jump on it. Jump again to kill it for good.



SUPER MAR





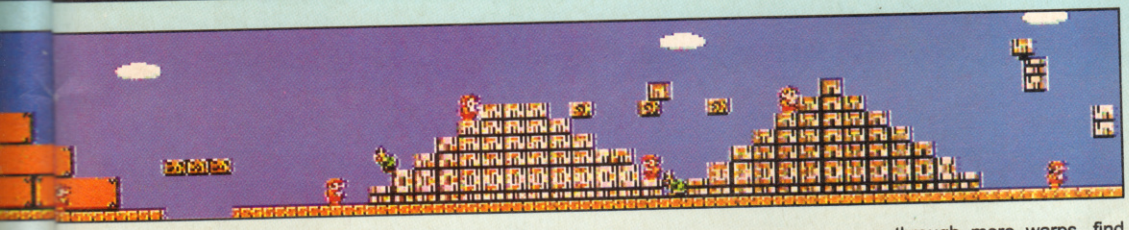
NES and only Sonic's first on the Mega Drive. Only time will tell, but I know where I'm placing my lire.

Anyway back to the story. The Mushroom World has been at peace since your last visit there in *Super Mario Bros 2*. Mario and Luigi fought long and hard to banish Bowser back to whence he came. But even though Bowser is now 300 years old, he still dreams of ruling all seven countries of Mushroom World.

While in exile, Bowser met up with some evil chick and produced seven children. Now this convenient number of children has grown up, Bowser has told them of how Mario and Luigi have plagued him all his life (which is a long time if you're Bowser's age!). Moulded in Bowser's image, these seven crusaders are dispatched by big Bows to do his dirty work for him.

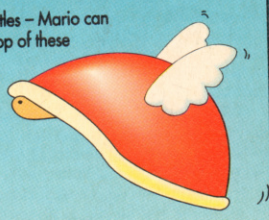
Firstly, Bowser decided that if he were to take over the countries, he would have to wrestle power from the kings already enthroned there. To this end, the seven kids have stolen the seven kings' magic wands and turned the rulers into animals of some sort. Luckily, word of this has reached Mario and Luigi which sets up the Italian plumbers for their third adventure.

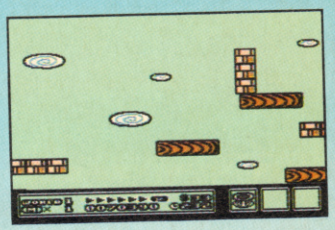
This time the Mario siblings will go deeper into Mushroom World than ever before. They will meet more bad guys, go through more warps, find more secret levels and rescue more people than both of their previous adventures put together. The lads must travel through the seven countries of Mushroom World, killing each of Bowser's children at the end of each, and returning the magic wand to its rightful owner, thus lifting the animal spell from the king. With all kings' wands restored, the duo must travel to Bowser's world and finish off the big guy for good.

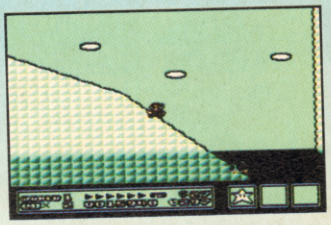


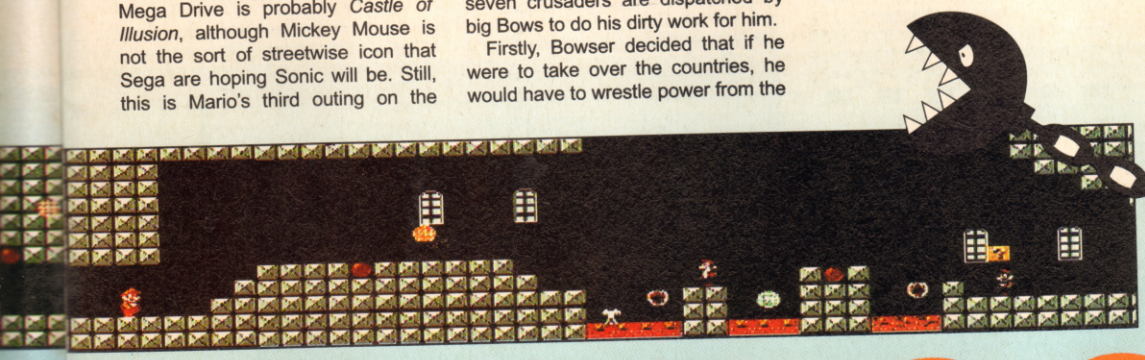
these accusations could be fired at *Sonic*, none of them would find any substance with *Super Mario Bros 3*. Perhaps us reviewers – and no doubt many of you – were blinded by the spectacular graphical effects and failed to see any of these flaws during our first few weeks of play. But with hindsight, the best game on the Mega Drive is probably *Castle of Illusion*, although Mickey Mouse is not the sort of streetwise icon that Sega are hoping Sonic will be. Still, this is Mario's third outing on the

Para-Beetles – Mario can ride on top of these guys.



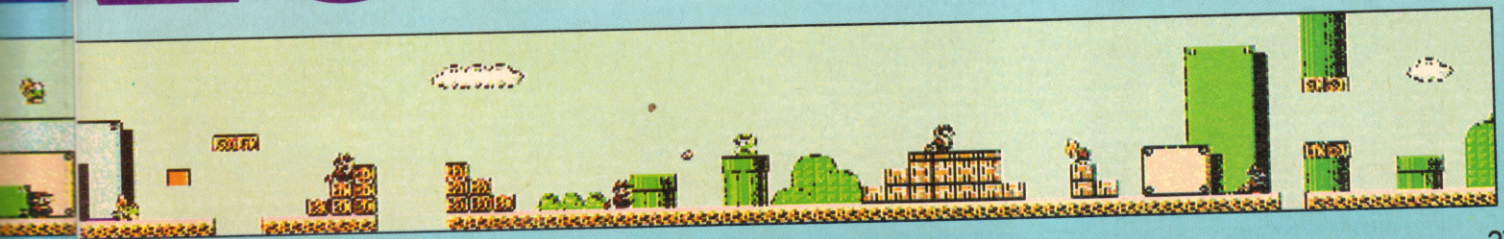




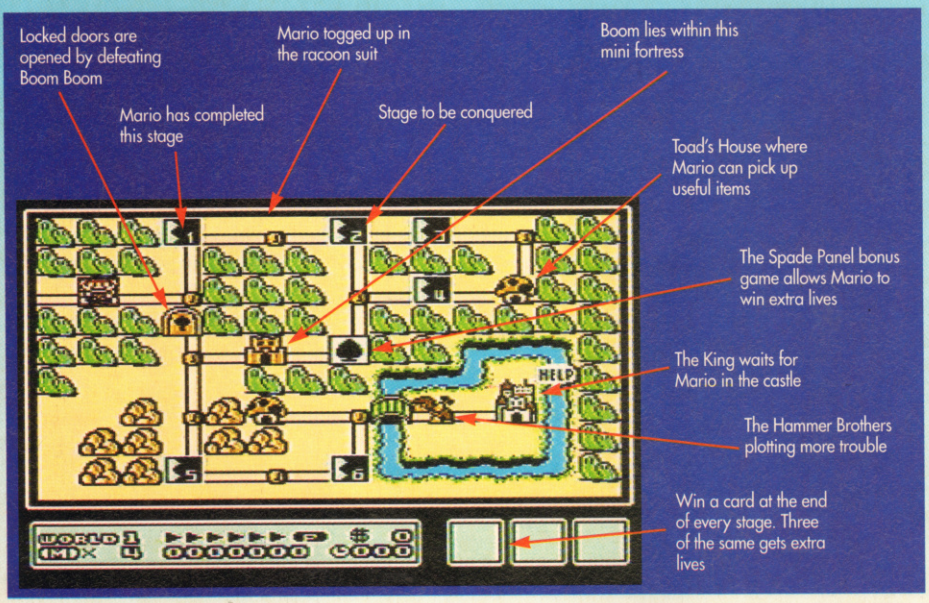


Chain Chomp – Jump high and far to avoid this big mouth.

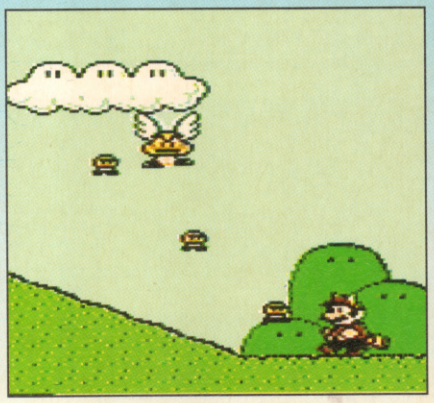
RIO BROS 3



but lost it as an unsuccessful inventor...

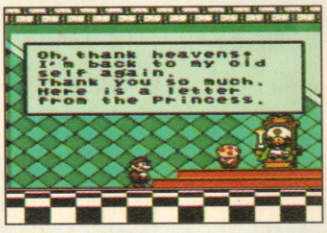


Boom Boom – Boss of the mini fortress. Jump on him when he leaves his shell.



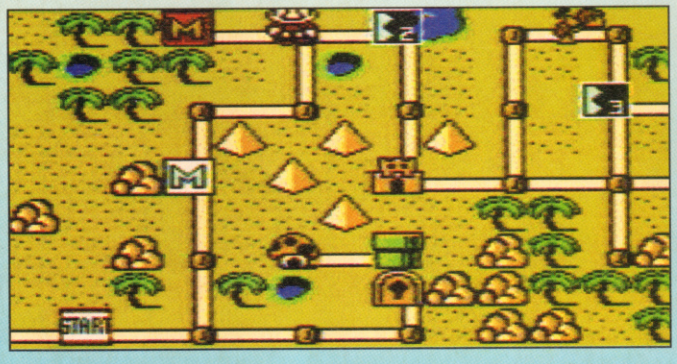
At the start of each level you are presented with a map of the country. By following the roads, which go through sub-stages and bonus screens, the boys must reach the King's castle where they will find a Bowser sprog.

While just Mario can tackle the whole adventure on his own, the most fun is had with two players. In this mode, either Mario and Luigi can cooperate and tackle each of the stages alternately or they can compete. If they compete, whenever they collide on the same sub-stage

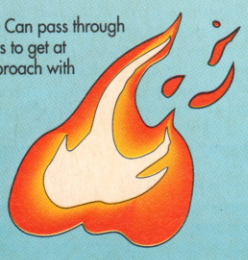


the game will switch to a competition screen where they try to take lives from each other.

As you would expect, Mario is equipped with a comprehensive



Firesnake – Can pass through solid objects to get at Mario. Approach with caution.



selection of moves to help him overcome the many obstacles he will encounter. The normal jump is okay for squashing small baddies, while holding the button down longer will make Mario jump higher. By holding the other button whilst Mario is walking you will make him sprint. The longer he sprints, the faster he goes until eventually Mario can fly. Also, jumping while sprinting at any speed gives Mario much more height. Talking of height, Mario can increase his by finding a special power-up which doubles his size and strength. This is useful for bashing blocks, but a bit awkward if you want to walk under some low-hanging blocks.

Swimming is another attribute that Mario has picked up while resting on his holiday island, and his underwater speed can be increased considerably if he can find the frog suit (!). Special suits are in abundance in Mushroom World, with most stages holding a racoon suit which Mario or Luigi can wear to swing the tail and bash bad guys. But I'm revealing too much! *Super Mario Bros 3* is the sort of game that invites the player to try things out for himself. None of the items' uses are apparent immediately, it is up to you to experiment. Similarly, most levels have more than one way through them. The quickest (and most profitable) way from A to B is sometimes via C! Just completing *Mario Bros 3* doesn't mean that the game is finished. Every time you play, you uncover something new.

Until *Sonic* gets a bit more depth, Mario will rule the roost – even if it is on some 8-bit machine that everyone thought was dead three years ago. Not only is Mario back, so's the NES – and both of them are here to stay for a long while yet!

THE MUSHROOM WORLDS

Grass Land – Made up of slopes and holes. It may look simple at first, but there are many hidden extras...

Desert Land – Loads of quicksand and devious enemies await the brothers. Look out for the pyramid and bash everything you see.

Water Land – Mario's swimming prowess comes to the fore, but you could "fly" through this one.

Giant Land – When everything gets bigger and you get smaller, it can mean nothing but trouble.

Sky Land – Up, up and away. Keep your head in the clouds.

Ice Land – Don't run too fast or you might slip up in this massive country.

Pipe Land – All your plumbing background will be tested to the full. Let no pipe go unexplored.

Dark Land – With more than 300 years experience, you can be sure Bowser's got something new up his sleeve.

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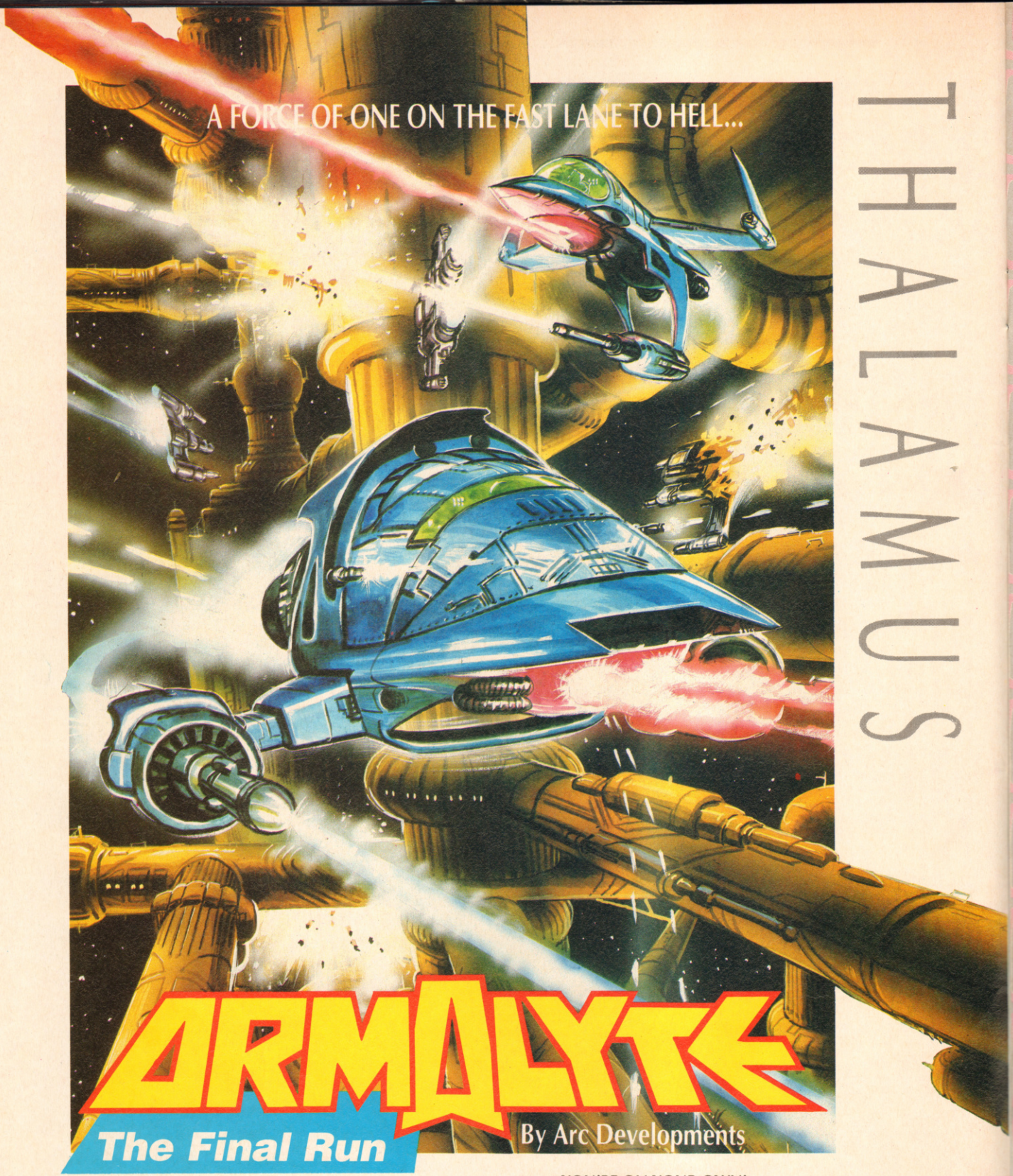
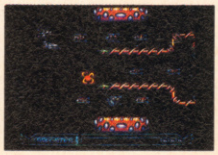

A FORCE OF ONE ON THE FAST LANE TO HELL...
THALAMUS
ARMALYTE
The Final Run
By Arc Developments



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And if you don't eliminate the alien horde Earth will die.
Enter the forbidden zone — give 'em hell!
Armalyte is classic shoot-'em-up action on five stunning levels of annihilation galore — a brilliant blaster to knock others for six!

preview INDEX

ARCADE ADVENTURE
Titles which will typically involve you searching, puzzling and shooting.

BEAT-'EM-UP
Anything that requires you to use fist or foot in a threatening manner.

PUZZLE
Games which require you to use your brain rather than your trigger finger.

RPG
Programs which require you to control a party of characters in boardgame fashion.

SHOOT-'EM-UP
Horizontal, vertical, sideways, multi-directional... any way you like it!

SPORT
The sort of games in which you compete against the console or human opponents.

STRATEGY
Mind games in which you must use a combination of skill and cunning to guarantee a win.

ROAD SIGNS

Each review begins with a pole on which sit two road sign-like icons and an information box. The road signs tell you at a glance the game genre and rating. Immediately following this is a rectangular box detailing number of players, stages and skill levels.

IMPORT REVIEWS

Generally these are shorter than other reviews and can almost be treated as previews since the games mentioned aren't widely available in the UK. When the games are officially released in the UK, these games will be reviewed in full. Import games can only be obtained from specialist grey importers. Suppliers of the games reviewed this month include:

Cheshire Games	051 3367596
Console Concepts	0782 712759
Dream Machines	0429 231703
King Bit Games	031 3379610
Pro Games	081 7699937
North Eastern Consoles	0429 820830

RATINGS

Every format reviewed has its own graphics, sound, playability and overall rating. The graphics score takes into account sprite definition, animation, background detail and technical merit. The sound rating considers in-game effects and background music.

The playability mark takes into account how well the game performs from the moment you pick up the stick until you drop from exhaustion. Finally, the overall rating takes into consideration audio visuals, playability, presentation, documentation and packaging.

ATARI LYNX	Chequered Flag	24
	Ishido	24
	Turbo Sub	25
GAME BOY	Caesar's Palace	37
	Hunt for Red October	36
	Skate or Die	37
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	Pop Breaker	52
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SUPER FAMICOM	Super R-Type	39

PLAYERS	2
SKILL LEVELS	1

Julian "Slap" Boardman clambers onto the ice

Despite – or, perhaps, due to – the remarkably violent nature of the action in the sport, ice hockey has, at least in this country, acquired a large following of families. For example, if you went to see the Durham Wasps, one of the UK's premier teams, you are far more likely to find parents waving babies than lager louts waving bottles. The paradox is that the violence that frequently erupts on the pitch never crosses beyond the perspex protective barriers into the crowd. Electronic Arts have managed to capture the violence on the ice quite superbly, and with the flash-bulbs going in the crowd they have also portrayed the fans quite accurately.

The pre-match stats show just how each team is equipped for their opponents. The ticks beside each player indicate how good they are. Russia and Canada are the best teams available, while Poland and Luxembourg fail to register any skill ticks on the stats screen.

The game can be played as one of three variants: a one-off regular season game, a one-match play-off in the EA Cup, or a four-match play-off in the EA Cup. Each of these matches takes place between two of the 22 international teams included – if you fancy a really even match, both teams can be of the same country. Once you've decided which match to play, the game can be attacked from one of a number of ways: one-player either home or away versus the computer, a two-player match with the players competing against each other, or a two-player match with the players as team mates versus the computer.

Depending on the style of game you want, *Hockey* can be played with or without penalties, such as hooking, roughing, etc, and with or without line changes. Line changes are when you swap one group of players for their back-up to give them a rest. If these are turned off then players simply don't get tired. It might sound daft but the idea is to give a fast, violent game with as few interruptions as possible.

Naturally, leaving out the penalties soon turns the game into *Speedball* on ice – not a bad thing at all. In fact, the feel of the game is a touch better than *Speedball*. The reason it plays better is that instead of just changing direction in a split second, the game incorporates inertia. You can't turn too sharply or stop without sliding, and just a push in one direction will see you gently sliding across the ice.

You may have wondered why I haven't gone into the rules. Well, to be honest, you don't really need to. All the correct rules are implemented – except the two-line pass which can slow down the game – if you want to play an authentic game of ice hockey. However, I suspect that the majority of the time you'll be seeing a penalties-off bloodfest on the ice, with ankles being hooked and ribs being crushed against the sidewall.

However, you do need to know these few things. When selecting your team, the number of ticks (up to three) next to the players indicates their quality. This system gives a quick and easy way of sizing up which team to choose and how good the opposition really are. Also, each game is made up of three periods which can be five, ten or 20 minutes

EA HOCKE

KEY

long each. If the game is still tied after three periods, it goes into sudden death overtime made up of periods of the same length, but the first to score next wins.

Once all this is decided, it's onto the pitch. Each human player controls one of his team at a time – either chasing or in control of the puck. When in possession, you can pass or shoot. The length of time you press the button determines the strength of the shot. If not in possession, you can switch control of your player and give him an extra burst of speed, which can turn into a body slam if timed right. If you're in close proximity to an attacker, this speed combines with your flailing stick to try to attack your opponent (with the type of aggressive move depending on how long and quickly you press the button).

The first face-off of the match. Hitting button C will charge your opponent and, if the penalties option is turned on, put you in the sin-bin for two minutes.

After getting familiar with these simple controls, you will find yourself up against the goal minder. Goalies are entirely computer controlled, and subsequently quite proficient. However, if you do fancy changing the goalie during play (even without the line changes option), you should remember that play won't stop for you. You can also, in dire situations, substitute your goal minder for an "outfield" player.

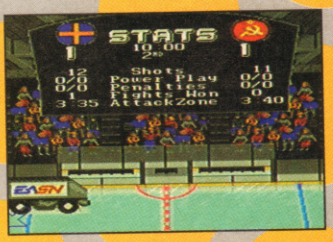
There is a lot of aggression out on the pitch so fights will be inevitable. But be warned, it costs a five-minute penalty for each of you if the penalties are switched on – if not, it becomes a matter of pride because the number of fights won is shown as an integral part of your team stats for the match. When a fight does erupt, the play stops and the action centres on the two players. You are equipped with two punches, can grab the other guy's shirt and move back and forth. The fights definitely don't detract from the gameplay, and usually enhance it as each player fights for the integrity of his team.

As well as the novel fighting scenes, there is also an instant replay option. If you manage to score a goal that is sheer poetry in motion then hitting two buttons will allow you to see it again – you can even pause and rewind to check up on those dubious decisions. The rewind should keep younger players amused for hours: everyone skating backwards at high speed is pretty weird. Hell, it amused me for hours.

Perhaps the major bonus of *EA Hockey* is that you practically get two games in one: the fast, *Speedball*esque, no-penalties style, or the EA Cup matches with nearly every rule and nuance of ice hockey implemented for those who want a totally accurate portrayal of the game (which is probably more suited to one-player matches).

EA Hockey captures the action and technicalities of a typically complex American game, and turns it into an accessible, enjoyable game.

The number of different sprites used in the players' animations is quite phenomenal. It gives the impression that the players are moving freely, not restrained by a lazy artist – there is even a routine where the player shoots backwards through his legs. Similar dedication is seen in the sonics department. Rob Hubbard's soundtrack is a rasping heavy metal jam session, and the effects contain some worryingly authentic body check samples where you can almost hear the ribs crack.



Between periods you get a chance to view your match performance so far. The shots on goal is usually the clearest indicator of who is in control of the match – but, as Brian Clough always says, it only takes a minute to score. Usually the computer will have more accurate shots than you, but your skill and luck means that your shots are more likely to score goals.

Electronic Arts are onto a definite winner here. *EA Hockey* plays like a dream, is highly addictive and looks great. The action theme should make it even more successful than *John Madden's Football*... but that really would take some doing.

MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✓ Slick presentation. ✓ Many frames of superb animation.	84
SOUND ✓ The few effects are frighteningly realistic. ✓ Title tune rips through your rib cage.	85
PLAYABILITY ✓ More playable than *John Madden's*. ✓ No appreciation of the sport needed.	92
ELECTRONIC ARTS **£39.99 ● OUT NOW**	**90**

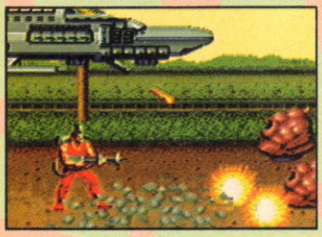
88

PLAYERS	2
STAGES	8
SKILL LEVELS	3
SUPPLIER	Cheshire Games

ALIEN STORM

As a cold front sweeps over Ireland, Robin Wyles avoids the alien storm in the West Country

The British love the weather, don't they? There's nothing they like more than a good natter about the "torrential" rain or the "blistering" heat. If only we were lucky enough to have an alien storm, now that would keep the tabloids supplied with front page stories for months. But no such luck for this meteorological freak has just hit the USA. However, no-one there is particularly bothered that thousands of men, women and children are being gobbled up by repulsive aliens that fell to earth in a freak storm. In fact these gruesome "newcomers" are making a real nuisance of themselves, eating houses, terrorising local supermarkets and trashing hi-fi stores. Thankfully, three people have realised the amount of carnage being created by the "visitors", and have banded together to destroy the species.



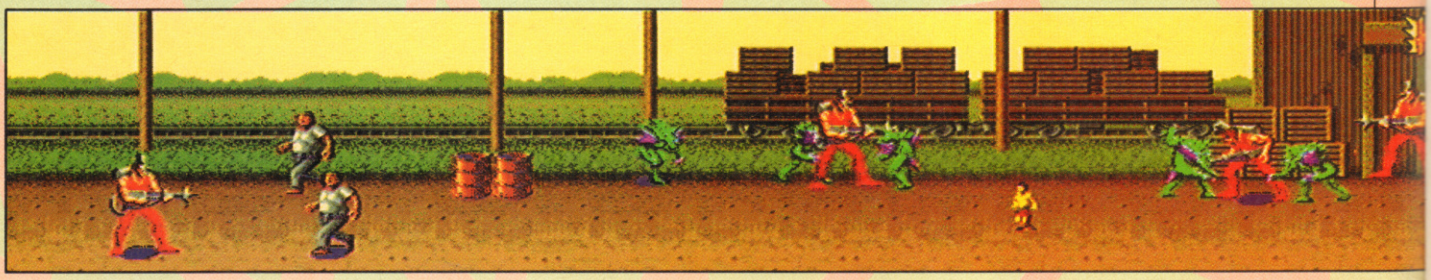
After choosing one-player or simultaneous two-player, you must decide which of the merry trio you wish to represent you. Each character not only has their own distinctive weapon and play style, but also a special weapon which uses energy.

The man decked out in red is known as Gordon (!) and he carries a crackling lightning gun. His special weapon brings on a space ship which sweeps down and shoots lasers at all the aliens onscreen. The female member of the group, Karla, wields a powerful flame thrower and can summon up a gigantic missile to demolish anything in its path. The last hero is the ever-faithful Scooter who carries an electrically charged whip, and will self-destruct before allowing himself to be taken by the aliens.

Most of the action looks and plays like a modern day *Golden Axe*. However, you do get some respite from the horizontally scrolling mayhem when, at the end of each level, you jump inside a local shop for some *Op Wolf* style action. When inside these supermarkets, hi-fi stores, etc, you can pick up extra energy and lives by shooting at the skulls with hide around the shop fittings. If you were one of those people who enjoyed all the splatter and gore of the arcade version, then this first home version to appear will not disappoint. *Alien Storm* not only looks like its arcade counterpart, it also plays like it. However, try not to start playing on easy level as the eight levels will be completed on the first go. Have some will power and try hard level and you'll get much more enjoyment and lastability out of this overly gruesome shoot-'em-up.

MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✓ Disgustingly slimy sprites! ✓ Super fast scrolling, little flicker.	88
SOUND ✗ SFX are strictly run-of-the mill. ✓ Slaughter to a different tune on each level.	85
PLAYABILITY ✗ No challenge on easy level. ✓ Splendiferous fun in two-player mode.	87
SEGA £34.99 ● IMPORT	88



Margaret Thatcher is John Kettley's greatest fan.

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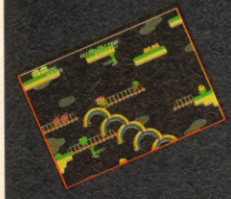

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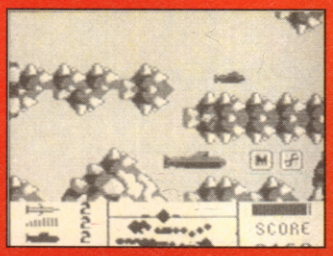
67

PLAYERS	2
STAGES	8
SKILL LEVELS	1
SUPPLIER	N. E.astern Consoles

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

Les Ellis goes deep, deep, deep undercover



Some nifty manoeuvring is needed as Ramius heads for those pick-ups. The extra missiles (M) will come in handy, and the repairs, although not vital at this stage, are always welcome. Just above you is a small Soviet sub. If you're accurate, you may be able to squeeze a homing missile through that gap in the seascape – unfortunately, the Red October isn't as nimble and will have to retrace its steps out of the cavern.

The year is 1984; just months before Gorbachev is to come to power. For once the Americans have been beaten in the arms race. The Soviets have come up with the ultimate in first strike weapons. It's fast, it's quiet and it's deadly. It could park a couple hundred of nuclear warheads off the coast of Los Angeles and no-one would know it was there. The weapon in question is the Red October, a Typhoon class nuclear submarine. Not only is the Red October capable of fantastic underwater speeds, and able to carry all the latest conventional and nuclear weaponry, it also comes complete with its very own silent propulsion system. The cativation (caterpillar) unit allows the Red October to move through the water totally undetected by sonar. Such a powerful weapon could tilt the Cold War in favour of the Soviets. But the Red October has been hijacked by a madman – or has it?

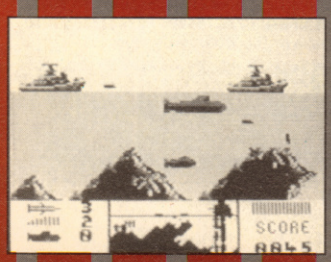
The captain of the Red October, Marco Ramius, has murdered the political officer on the ship and, it is believed, is trying to defect to the States. To avoid an embarrassing international incident, the Soviets have informed the Americans that Ramius is a rogue commander out to blow up America. The Soviets want everyone to hunt him down and kill him. But the Americans aren't convinced by the Soviet charade and are trying to get their hands on both Ramius and his precious boat without the Soviets suspecting anything.

You play the part of the Lithuanian submarine commander and must take the Red October through the waters of the Atlantic to America. Normally, this would be quite a simple exercise, but the whole Red Fleet is after you. The Kremlin want that submarine back at all costs!

The submarines and warships in pursuit of you are constantly firing sonar-guided missiles. Obviously, the Red October is not the nimblest craft to take to the water and avoiding them using conventional techniques is tough. But, remember, the Red October has the high-tech cativation drive which will make the sub invisible to sonar. However, the cativation is an expensive piece of kit and needs much powering up if you're to use it often.

The one-player game is a simple, blast-everything-and-get-the-hell-outta-here game, but the two-player option adds an extra dimension to play. If you link up with a friend (who will quickly become your enemy), one player takes charge of the Red October while the other player finds himself in control of various craft (subs, warships, jets, hydrofoils, helicopters, etc) in pursuit of Ramius. This is definitely the best way to play the game, because the one-player game is unbearably difficult and soon becomes boring.

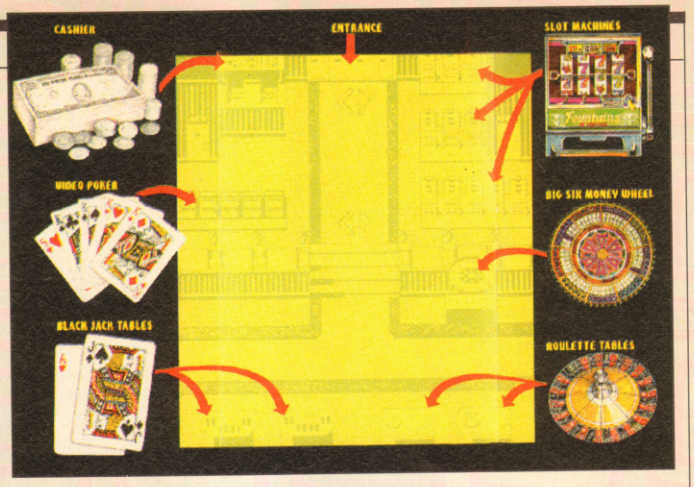
The Game Boy version of *Red October* isn't what you would call a game that sticks closely to the film storyline. In fact, it's all a bit like *R-Type* underwater, but the controls are really slack and the bad guys have little variation. For two players or not at all.



GAME BOY

GRAPHICS ✗ Very small enemy sub and missile sprites. ✓ Good seascape; detailed vessels topside.	71
SOUND ✗ Naff tune plays throughout. ✗ Pathetic blasting effects.	63
PLAYABILITY ✗ Bosses are unbelievably tough. ✓ Easy to pick up and play.	65
HI-TECH EXPRESSIONS £23.95 ● IMPORT	67

Definition of panic: two sailors in a shower with the soap on the floor.



PLAYERS	1
STAGES	5
SKILL LEVELS	1
SUPPLIER	North Eastern Consoles

Les Ellis extends his overdraft

CAESAR'S PALACE

Gambling is a dangerous game. Unlike arcade games, you can never beat a casino game, no matter how much money you pump into it. Yet millions of addicts world-wide insist on having that familiar "one more go". They never seem to realise, the only safe bet is no bet.

With the arcade industry always under pressure to control the playing of coin-ops, Nintendo have converted all the most popular casino games and squeezed them onto the Game Boy. Now addicts can play wherever they go, safe in the knowledge that the money they are betting is not their own and they can never lose – of course, they can never win either. You enter Caeser's Palace in Las Vegas with $1,000. Before you lie a collection of gambling delights: video poker, three types of slot machine, the Big Six money wheel, roulette and blackjack. The playing area is well presented with a scrolling screen showing all the different tables and machines. Each game is surprisingly addictive in its own right so don't be surprised if you blow your $1000 at blackjack in one night.

This is the ideal game for the Game Boy: simple but highly addictive.

GAME BOY

GRAPHICS ✓ Clear play area with ultra smooth scrolling. ✓ Each game is superbly presented.	82
SOUND ✗ Only a few beeps during the game. ✓ A couple of tunes play on the casino floor.	62
PLAYABILITY ✓ Loads of variety, quick to play. ✓ Could turn you into a Game Boy addict.	75
ARCADIA **£22.95 ● IMPORT**	**76**

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	8
SKILL LEVELS	1
SUPPLIER	North Eastern Consoles

Les Ellis: he's rad, he's bad, he's raving mad

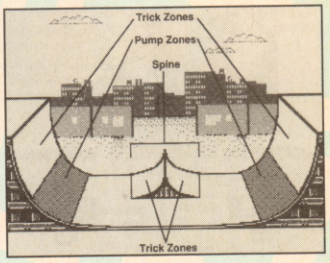
SKATE OR DIE TOUR DE THRASH

Skate or Die now on the Game Boy? Yep, you'd better believe it. But it ain't like the other versions, this one has a style all of its own. But don't worry, all the old team are here to help; Rodney's still greasing the wheels, while Lester has all the info on the pipe locales.

You are reckoned to be king o' the boards, and have just entered the world street-skating championships in Santa Cruz, California. All your old adversaries are here: Bod Boyle, Eric "Ed" Dressen, Tom Knox, Rob "Barn" Roskopp, Flocko, Claus Grabke, Hoosier and Corey O'Brien. All of them are out to shred your feet, so you'll need to be on top form.

The Tour de Thrash will take you all over the world, visiting such diverse cities as Hanoi, Panama and Chernobyl. The game is split into two parts: the half pipe and the retro ramp. The former just requires you to speed through a track, banking the curves and hitting the heights. The latter is where you can show your real skating prowess. On the retro ramp all of your flash moves can be displayed in the hope that you'll get a high rad rating.

The two sections of play make *Skate or Die* quite an attractive game. But the gameplay soon bores as these stages are very repetitive. However, if you're one of those people who play the Lynx's *California Games* skating section all the time, you may find the monochrome version quite a trip. But a whole game based around the sport is a bit much.



GAME BOY

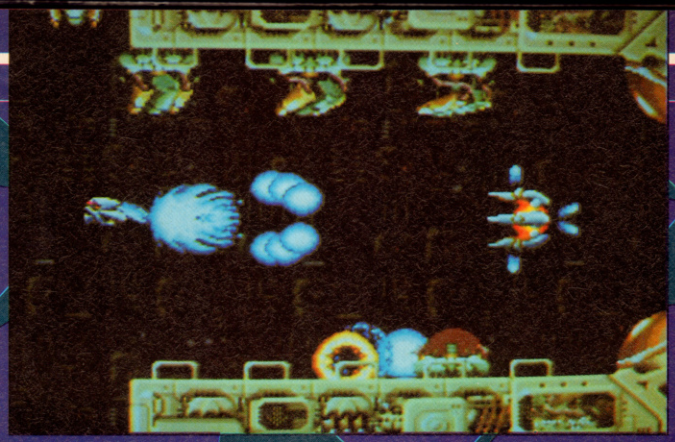
GRAPHICS ✗ Unimaginative backdrops are dated. ✗ Poor animation, lack of detail.	54
SOUND ✗ Lousy music drives you nuts. ✗ A few pathetic beeps for effects.	53
PLAYABILITY ✗ Hard to access moves when needed. ✗ Little variation makes for poor value.	58
ELECTRONIC ARTS **£23.95 ● IMPORT**	**55**

77

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	7
SKILL LEVELS	4
SUPPLIER	Dream Machines

Super Les Ellis is R-Type of reviewer (we lied)

SUPER R-TYPE



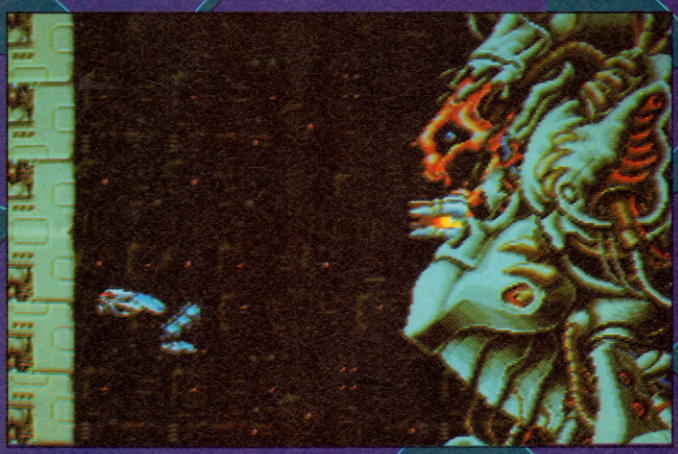
Those pesky Bydos. They've already had their butts kicked on just about every format there is, from the arcades to the Amiga, and still they come back for more. Now they are trying to take over the newly created universe inside the Super Famicom. If they get their way, there will be no more racing round in *F-Zero*, no more playful scraps in *Final Fight*, just misery, death and 8-bit graphics. They must be stopped.

But this isn't like your previous missions into Bydo territory. Information has reached you appertaining to the installation of a multi-million zenny defence system. Luckily, this info was received in time for you to soup up your old R-9 warship into what is now known as the Super R-9. The new machine comes with an autofire option and two types of energy bolts. The first bolt is just an improvement on the old charging up unit from the R-9. The second, however, requires you to charge twice as long, but it will send out two energy bolts, one above and one below, that split up and home in on enemy ships. With that in mind, you feel confident for your latest foray into the depths of Bydonian space.

When you finally get through the asteroid fields and dummy black holes, the Bydos come screaming in from all sides either trying to ram you or blast you with rockets and lasers. Even with your hotted up ship, you will find the Bydos a difficult race to destroy. It is because of this that you must try to find the weapons of previous adventurers who have failed to survive the Bydos' defences. Also, your folks back at Blast HQ have just perfected a unit which can be attached to the front or back of your ship and then sent out to destroy enemies or stay put to protect your ship. If only you can last long enough for the drone to arrive with it.

The Bydonian empire currently consists of seven large planets, with a not-very-small alien or ship protecting each one. But research – not to mention experience – indicates that each of these monstrosities has a weak spot. Pummel away at this point for a couple of minutes and the planet will soon be liberated.

Super R-Type could be a fine shoot-'em-up, ideally suited to a machine like the Super Famicom, if it weren't for one thing. It's not the detailed parallax graphics, nor is it the fine sound for there is a great soundtrack. Its one let-down is speed. For some reason – which probably has something to do with the main processor running at 4Mhz – the Super Famicom just can't handle scrolling and too many sprites on screen. *Gradius III* had the same problem and *Super R-Type* doesn't seem to have overcome it. You get more than five sprites onscreen and the whole game locks up, which can be very frustrating if you're stuck in the middle of an alien onslaught at the time.



There are plenty of the old addictive *R-Type* elements here, if you can bear the occasional systems slowdown. Although the new super weaponry does mean that the game is dead easy on Kids Level (I completed it on my third go – just call me Lezza).

SUPER FAMICOM

GRAPHICS ✓ Detailed scrolling backdrops are great. ✓ Most sprites are hideously gross.	87
SOUND ✗ Some squelchy sound effects are wimpy. ✓ Heart pounding music plays throughout.	75
PLAYABILITY ✗ That slowdown... ✓ Brill blastoid action for all that want it.	70
IREM **£44.95 ● IMPORT**	77

A woman in America had feet 60cms long!

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86

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	n/a
SKILL LEVELS	3

You can never find a bottle of Listerine when you want one, as Les Ellis discovered

You can feel nothing but pity for old King Maximus. The guy is probably the best thing to happen to his kingdom, and what should happen one day but some dastardly dragon comes along and takes away his power. Isn't that just typical!

The power of the kingdom is held within the Sceptre of Order. While polishing it one day, the king was struck to the ground by neighbouring ruler of the Dark Legions, Arech Dragonbreath. Before he left the palace, Dragonbreath shouted something about wrestling the kingdom from the control of the King and subjecting all his subjects to unspeakable atrocities. Maximus, who lay prostrate on the floor, suddenly felt a sharp pain in his chest; it was the power of his kingdom gradually fading away.

After opening this treasure chest, you find 200 gold coins. You can either keep this money to bolster your finances, or give it away to the local peasants and increase their loyalty to boost your leadership rating.

Without further ado, King Maximus summoned the country's top battle-hardened soldiers – Sir Crimsaun the Knight, Lord Palmer the Paladin, The Sorceress Tynnestra and Mad Moham the Barbarian – to his chambers. He then explained his inexorable link with his country's power, and the fact that if the Sceptre of Order was not returned to its rightful place both he and his kingdom would be doomed to a life in darkness.

Meanwhile, Arech Dragonbreath was informing his evil minions of his plans to overthrow the King. His orders to the underlings were simple: take as much land as possible, using as much force as possibly (the more deaths the better).

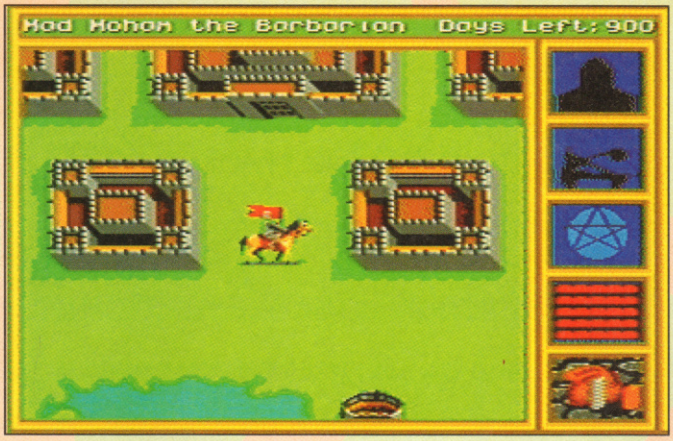
But the evil, yet wise, dragon knew that his newly-found power would only last if he could ensure that the Sceptre of Order would stay in his hands. To this end, Dragonbreath buried the Sceptre somewhere on the four continents. But in case he wanted to find it again, old halitosis head drew a map

Coming across a wrecked caravan in the desert, you find some peasants wondering around aimlessly. Give them a job in your army and they'll be forever in your debt. Recruit too many though, and they'll cause you to be forever in debt.

Inside the main city, you can recruit the King's normal troops into your army. These guys are usually archers, pikemen and militia. Your finances need to be carefully controlled as the King will only pay you a single wage each week. Extra money can be gained by winning fights and finding treasure chests.

KING'S BO

Look out for a sequel next year...



ALL THE KING'S MEN

Sir Crimsaun the Knight | Lord Paladin the Palmer | Mad Moham the Barbarian | Tynnestra the Sorceress

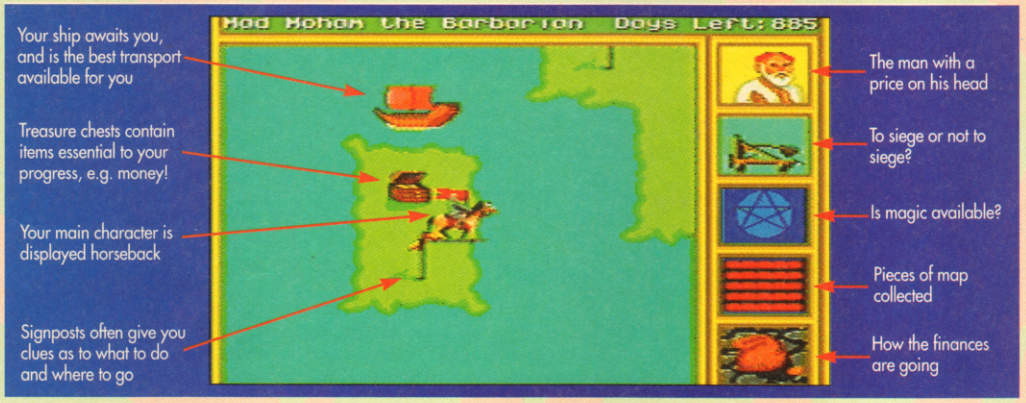
BOUNTY

indicating its position. Such a map would be a dangerous thing if it got into the wrong hands (i.e. yours), so Dragonbreath tore it up into 25 pieces. He gave one piece to each of his 16 villainous nobles, hid one in each of eight powerful artefacts, and kept one for himself.

After hearing rumours of the existence of this map, you, as one of the four warriors, immediately set off to obtain all 25 pieces and find the Sceptre.

You are first seen twiddling your thumbs outside the city walls. Your first task is to recruit a large army to help you. The army is paid for by the King, who will give you varying wages depending on which character you have chosen to play. Each character also has leadership qualities and a certain amount of spell power. The choice of your character is crucial to your success, so choose wisely. Once the army have been recruited, you set off on horseback to seek out any of Dragonbreath's followers.

Mad Moham the Barbarian is at the starting point outside the main city. Inside the palace, King Maximus lies dying. Only you can save him and his kingdom from a life under the evil dragon Arech Dragonbreath. The first place to visit is that little town beneath you.



people and objects can be found by talking to the inhabitants of small towns. Here you can also purchase spells, buy other modes of transport (e.g. boats), and take up a contract on one of the evil warlords. Also hiding around the countryside are mercenaries who can be employed to boost your army's strength.

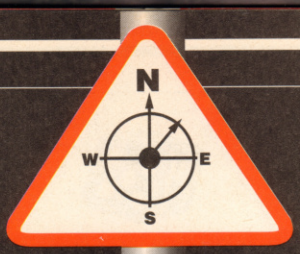
If your army happens to bump into Dragonbreath's forces on their travels, a battle will ensue. The screen display switches to show the opposing armies attacking each other. You must now give your battle orders and control the moves of the various units of your army (horses, peasants, etc). The winner of the battle is simply the last man left standing. Win and you will gain a part of the map from one of the warlords, lose and you will become a prisoner of the dragon.

King's Bounty is a surprisingly addictive game. There is so much to do and so much to explore that one game is never enough. Luckily for us, New World Computing, the game's designers, have included a passcode option to restart the game exactly where you left off. This is no five minute wonder and will take many long sessions before you finish it – if you finish it. People say that the Mega Drive market is just full of shoot-'em-ups, but Electronic Arts are actively trying to change all that – and what a great job they're doing.

MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✓ Clearly drawn map and characters. ✓ Detailed sprites; impressive battle scenes.	83
SOUND ✗ Spot effects are few and unimaginative. ✓ Neat ditty plays throughout.	76
PLAYABILITY ✓ Fine mixture of gaming strategies. ✓ Extremely addictive; easy to get into.	89
ELECTRONIC ARTS **£34.99 ● OUT NOW**	86

...provisionally called *King's Kit-Kat!*



82

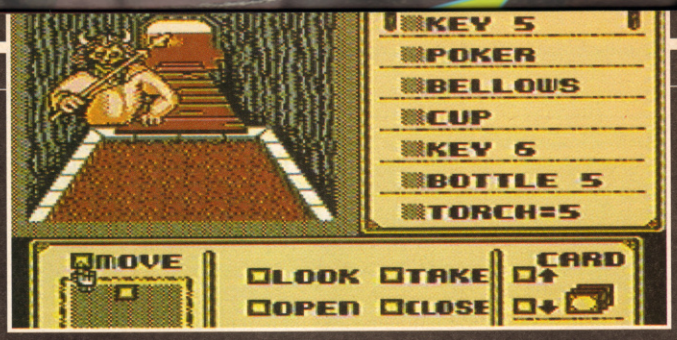
PLAYERS	1
STAGES	1
SKILL LEVELS	1

SHADOWGATE

Les Ellis tries to find a shadow of his former self

Call me old fashioned, but when Nintendo mentioned that they had an adventure lined up for their next release, I was a little sceptical at the prospect of an adventure game which didn't use a keyboard or disk drive. "But you don't need a keyboard for our great adventure," the guys at Nintendo proclaimed, "it runs in a menu-driven environment which makes it far more playable than those boring old computer ones." Okay, I thought, but how about saving games and all that malarky? "No trouble, we've got all that covered. It's all built into this special cartridge we've developed." The plot thickened, but nothing like as deep as the plot of the actual game itself...

You have answered a classified advert placed in the latest issue of Adventurer's Monthly, your second favourite mag (after RAZE, of course). The rates offered by a mysterious Lakmir seemed quite reasonable and you needed the work. Your last job required much slaying of dragons and rescuing of maidens, so a little castle exploration would make a relaxing change.



The job interview seemed to be going well till the wizard Lakmir started babbling on about some ghastly goings-on. But stupidly you ignored them as the rantings of a senile old man. If only you had got out of the room right then, but no, you waited around for the wizard to tell you more. After a few minutes of unintelligible raving, Lakmir started waving his arms around and before you could say "abracadabra" you were standing in front of a gnarled oak door. As blue smoke settled around you, the wizard's final words rang in your head: "Castle Shadowgate... Castle Shadowgate... Beware of Behemoth." You sit down for a while and start thinking...

From the old man's muddled ramblings you deduce that this is Castle Shadowgate, and within it lies an unsavoury character called Behemoth. And you're not far wrong for the owner of the castle, the Warlock Lord, has summoned Behemoth from the dead and together they are planning to destroy the rest of mankind. The old man's message is becoming clearer by the minute. You also remember something about you being the last in a long line of kings descended from your family. Lakmir seemed to think that you would be the only who could defeat the two evils waiting behind the door in front of you. So you open the door and your latest adventure begins...

Shadowgate's simply interface owes a lot to the Lucasfilm point 'n' click engine that ran *Indy, Monkey Island,* etc. Although the commands may seem few, they are highly manipulative and very quick to use. The execution of all the commands is so easy that you forget you're playing an adventure on a console and concentrate more on the puzzling elements of the game.

Problems are numerous and wide-ranging. But they contain such variety in complexity that the game provides a challenge for both novices and experienced adventurers alike. And when you do solve a myriad of unbelievably hard puzzles, yet fall foul of a blindingly simple obstruction, all is not lost as *Shadowgate* has a battery back-up for saving games.

If you're the sort of person who only has the tolerance for inane beat-'em-ups and vacant shoot-'em-ups then pass on this one. *Shadowgate* is for anyone who liked *Dungeon Master.* This is a thinker's game that doesn't cloud its strategy with stupid "action" stages. At 40 quid *Shadowgate* isn't cheap, but for months of taxing gameplay it is well worth it.

NES

GRAPHICS ✓ Finely detailed scenery in dark atmosphere. ✓ Huge play area with well drawn sprites.	83
SOUND ✓ Haunting theme music plays throughout. ✓ An abundance of spot effects.	76
PLAYABILITY ✓ Well constructed control method. ✓ Great puzzles with good difficulty range.	81
NINTENDO **£39.99 ● OUT NOW**	82

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PLAYERS	1
STAGES	8
SKILL LEVELS	3
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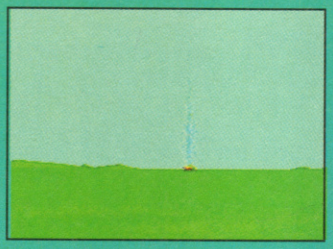
We got the big guns out for this one, but Les Ellis got well and truly tanked

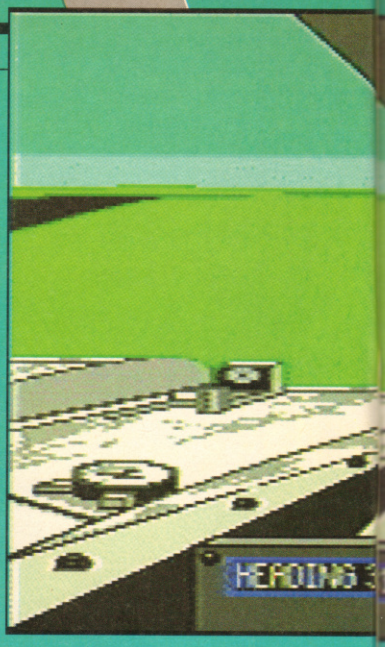
M-1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK

Let's face it, anyone who wants to become a member of a tank crew must have a severe mental defect. Firstly, in times of war you spend most of the day (and night) couped up in a tin box, sweating your butt off for a leader who probably thinks a tank is a type of jersey. Then, of course, there's the small matter of the dedicated tank-busting aircraft who have nothing in mind but to blow you into little bits. This makes most tanks akin to tracked coffins. Still, they must have some use because they are now the main weapon used in World War III.

Oh, didn't I tell you about the war? WWIII has just broken out in Europe. The few remaining countries of the Soviet Union have killed off Gorbachev and declared war on the rest of Europe. NATO have reacted strongly by deploying all the ground forces available. So far the Soviets have managed to capture most of Eastern Europe, and now they are planning a push towards Germany. But assembling in eastern Germany is the American heavy artillery of NATO. As a newly-qualified tank commander, you must deploy your tanks in such a way as to foil the onslaught of the Soviets.



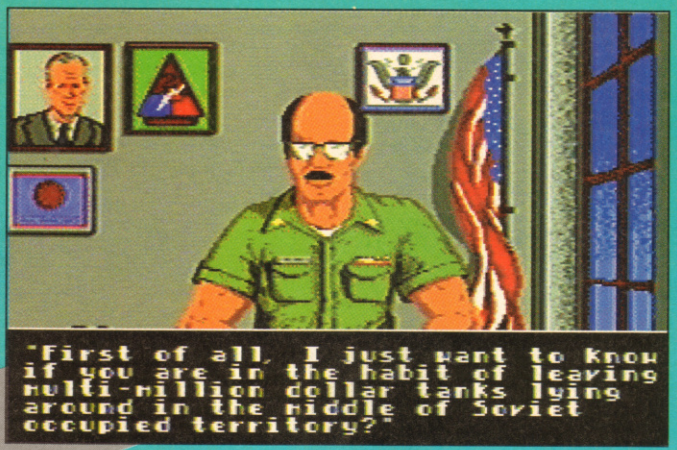
It had to happen eventually. A poignant reminder of what you will be left with if you take too much damage: a smoking wreck and a long walk home.



Explosive Anti-Tank), SABOT (a short range armour piercing round) and AX (anti-helicopter and long range armour piercing).

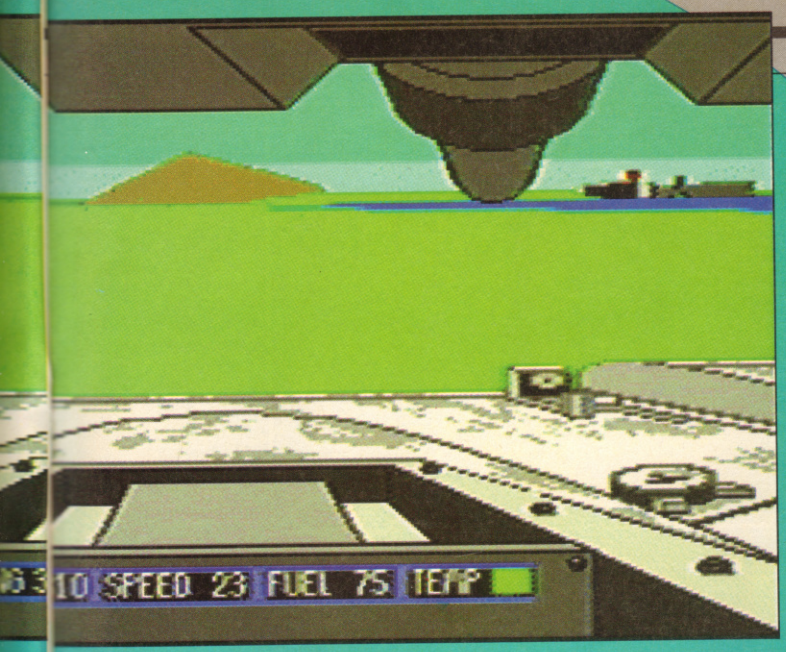
As tank commander, you are placed in the most powerful tank at the front of the NATO attack. Within the tank there are four positions that you have to fill: driver, cupola, gunner and tank commander.

As the driver, you can monitor the fuel, speed and engine temperature, as well as steer the tank. The cupola is the dome bit on the top of the tank. If you stick your head out of here, you can see what's going on around



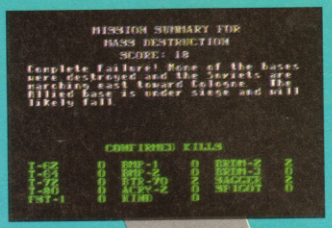
It's a fair cop, guv. So I left the tank in enemy territory; it was either the tank or me.

The Abrams costs around $1,000,000 to buy.

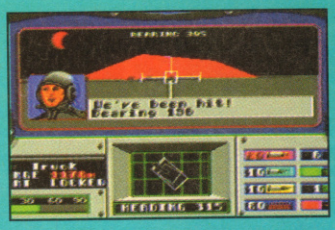


The driver is doing a grand job. The enemy base is in sight but you'll have to find a way across the water first. There must be a bridge around here somewhere, but while you're looking the enemy continue to use your tank for target practice. Somebody wake up the gunner...

you. All very nice, but most of your time will be spent with your head down and behind the controls of the gunner. He has complete control over all combat procedures. Finally, the tank commander's station is where all the strategic decisions are made.



At the end of each mission you are given a summary of how you did, in this case not so well. You completely screwed up. The only redeeming accomplishment is that you managed to take a total of six bad guys with you.



Travelling at night would be a very perilous thing if it weren't for these new-fangled night sights (10% of your tank's cost!). Now all we have to do is spin around and see what is using us for target practice. The truck currently in range is the one you're escorting so don't blow that up.

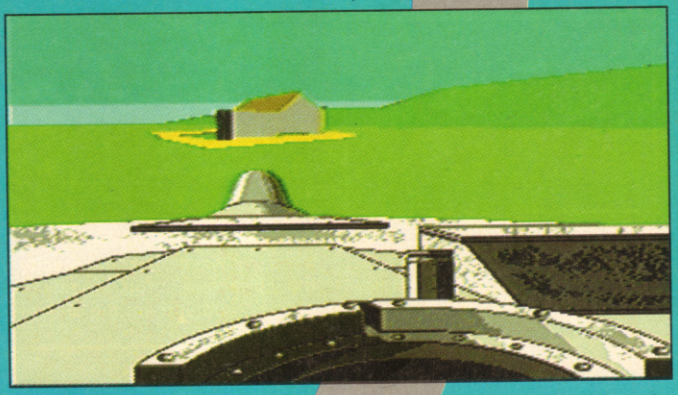
The eight missions take you through all the major battles of the war. The Moselle Defense is the opening battle depicting the Soviets trying to rush NATO lines. Then follows the Moselle Intercept where you are dispatched to rescue a stranded convoy before the Soviets can reach it. The third mission, the Siegen Infiltration, is your first real test where you have to find and destroy two enemy bases hidden in the mountains. Once they are obliterated, you move onto the Nuremberg Highway where an allied base has been cut off from its supplies. You must go in to clear out the Reds and reconnect the barracks with its supplies. But the Soviet machine crushes through Germany...

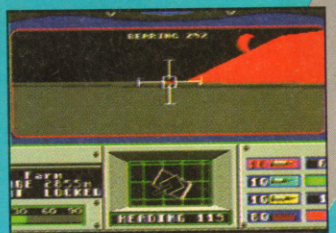
The Mass Destruction mission puts your base under severe threat, so you have to knock out three enemy bases and the peripheral troop movements around them. In The Road to Bonn the tide is turning against the Allied forces as a huge Soviet convoy heads towards Bonn. You have to destroy the only remaining bridge and hinder their progress. The Hanover Push is the penultimate mission, and requires you to destroy the enemy's main base and locate their weapons store. The final mission places you as an escort of a five vehicle convoy trying to get supplies to civilians on the Rhine. Complete all these missions successfully and you will have sufficiently weakened the Soviets to bring them to the negotiating table.

M-1 Abrams Battle Tank is a curious game to appear on the Mega Drive. Indeed, it first appeared on the IBM PC back in 1989 to much acclaim from the "critics". *Battle Tank* is not the sort of game Mega Drive owners are accustomed to, but Sega have done a terrific job in bringing this computer-originated game to the confines of a console.

The 3-D landscape and buildings work terribly well, although it does take an unbearably long time to get around the place, often leaving you disoriented if you don't use the map regularly.

The many missions make the game accessible to all types of player, and the varying attacks and intelligence of the enemy ensure that you'll want to complete all the missions before the cart is destined for the dusty shelves. Playable and compelling.





MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✓ The fast 3-D won't fail to impress. ✓ Detailed information screens throughout.	83
SOUND ✗ Grating engine noise causes despair. ✓ Moody title music sets the atmosphere.	74
PLAYABILITY ✓ Many missions means much meandering. ✓ So easy to play – and enjoy.	89
SEGA £34.95 ● IMPORT	85

TANK

The Abrams can travel up to 100 km/h.

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	n/a
SKILL LEVELS	1

SOLSTICE

He was stuck behind the hippy buses, he went to Stonehenge and now Robin Wyles has played the game

In a time of darkness, in a time of evil and in a time when there was no soft toilet paper, a powerful force called Kastlerock ruled the world. Kastlerock was a menacing structure that towered above everything in the land. Its evil spread far and wide, and like a Big Brother, no-one could escape from its power.

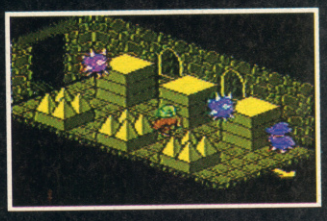
However, it is rumoured that if you can find the six parts of the Magical Staff of Demons and piece them together, you will have the power to destroy whatever force is behind the evil in Kastlerock. However, there's one problem, the six bits are scattered around the rooms *inside* Kastlerock. To compound problems, Princess Eleanor has been trapped in the castle for over a year and no-one knows if she is alive or dead.

There's only one way to solve this, someone – okay, you – must venture through the hidden terrors of Kastlerock and rescue the princess. Your name is Shadax, and you are the only one of your people brave enough (or stupid enough) to enter a castle from which no-one has ever left. You view the whole game from the isometric perspective used in games like *Cadaver*. Indeed, the whole game is very similar to *Cadaver*, both visually and in content. Every room has something special that must be picked up or overcome before you can exit it. Most rooms are packed with monsters, and these follow a predefined path so they can be easily killed if you have a weapon or avoided if not.

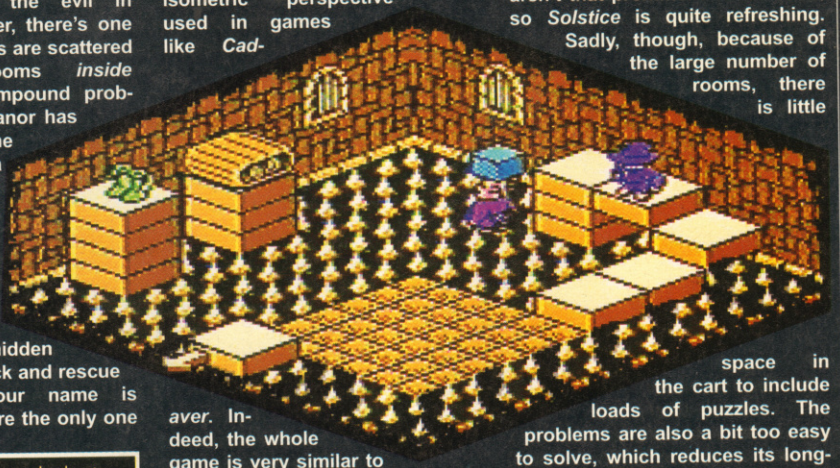
Rooms also contain inanimate objects which are usually used to move around and jump on to reach the exit. Some exits are not actually shown on the screen though, so a look at the Kastlerock map of rooms visited so far will reveal them (even if you haven't found them).

Solstice may not look as good as *Cadaver*, or play as well, but on the NES this is an admirable attempt to relive the *Knight Lore* days. Strangely, isometric games aren't that prominent on the NES, so *Solstice* is quite refreshing.

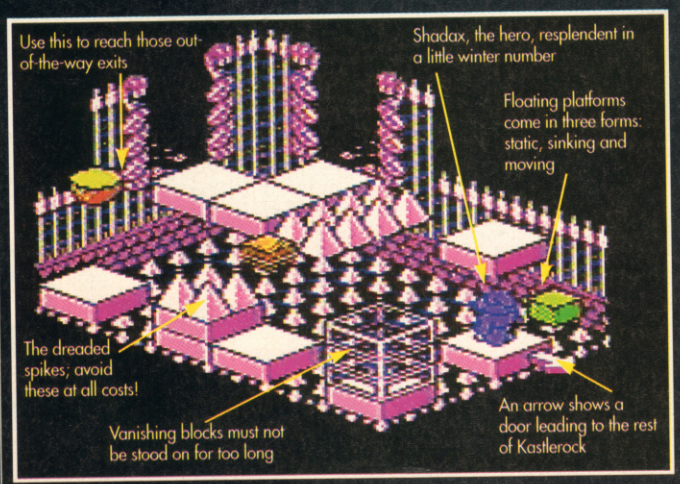
Sadly, though, because of the large number of rooms, there is little space in the cart to include loads of puzzles. The problems are also a bit too easy to solve, which reduces its long-term appeal. Still, anything the reminds you of the old Ultimate days can't be bad.



This screen is one of the easier ones. Just duck into one of the side alleys as that monster goes past. Try not to get impaled on the spiked balls that are bouncing up and down.



The spiky floor must be avoided at all costs. The higher platform can be reached by quickly jumping onto the disappearing blocks (the transparent ones) and then stepping onto the floating platform which should deposit you next to the exit.



NES

GRAPHICS	70
✗ Unimaginitive use of colour.	
✓ Good isometric perspective.	
SOUND	64
✗ Ropey sound effects.	
✗ Mediocre tune plays throughout.	
PLAYABILITY	72
✗ Some puzzles are annoyingly easy.	
✓ Problems and characters increase progressively.	

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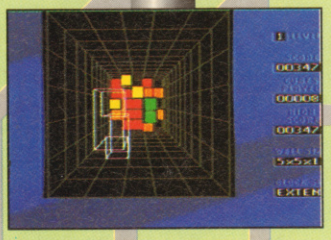
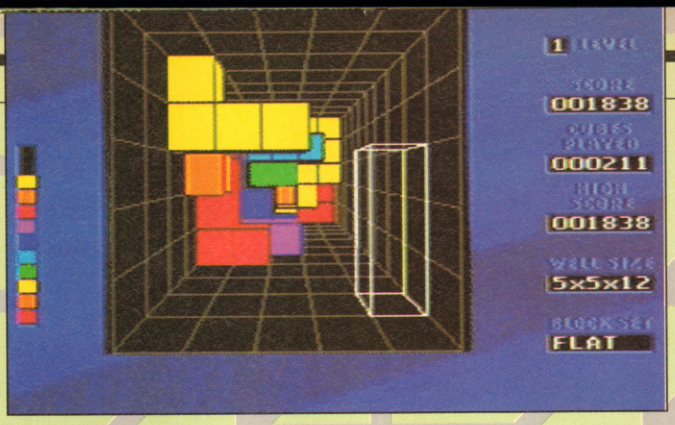
BLOCKOUT

Julian Boardman went for a spin around the block and never came back (hooray!)

PLAYERS	2
STAGES	18
SKILL LEVELS	4





Only two levels away from oblivion. Unfortunately, whoever's been at the controls so far is hopeless; just look at the mess of blocks in these 12 levels of mayhem! The meter on the left shows what level you are on, with each colour indicating the depth of the blocks (this combines with a sound effect of varying pitch) as you get nearer the top.

Ever since *Tetris*... blah, blah, blah... Well, the latest is *Blockout*, a game that adds an "extra dimension" to the familiar "block"-busting formula.

By taking a well and combining it with 3-D blocks, Electronic Arts have pushed the *Tetris* concept one step beyond *Welltris*, which was purely 2-D. Now blocks not only build up around the side of the pit, but also on top of each other, effectively filling in the middle of the well. The object this time is to create a solid layer at the bottom of the pit, which will then disappear in the time-honoured fashion, dropping all above it down a level. Fail to complete a row and the blocks will start building on top of each other, and inexorably nearer the top of the dreaded well.

All games of this genre are based entirely around speed. *Blockout* comes with ten starting speeds which are chosen at the start of play. On top of that, the further you get into the game the faster the blocks plummet to the bottom. Ultimately, this means the play varies from stupidly slow to unplayably fast; something to suit everyone!

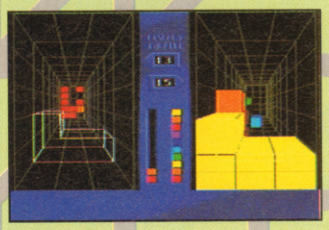
The variation of games is something in which *Blockout* excels. Not only is the speed variable, but so is the size of the well. All the dimensions – depth, length, width – can be altered to suit your requirements. You are also able to customise the size and shape of the blocks which drop down the well. The simplest set of blocks is made up of basic 2-D blocks: one block thick, L shapes etc. Conversely, the top-of-the-range, no-nonsense set for professionals comprises blocks of all shapes and sizes, with lumps and protrusions in the most awkward places.

With all these options to customise the game (somebody has calculated that there are 750 game combinations), you'd have thought that *Blockout* would be the ideal puzzle game. But perhaps it is too clever for its own good. *Blockout* somehow misses out on the addictive qualities of *Tetris* et al.

Even the two-player option – which usually saves a game from the depths of a dusty software box – fails to excite. Playing against a friend is unbearable because the game takes too long to respond to your frantic button presses. On the later, faster levels, where quick reactions are needed, you often press the button a couple of times and get no response. Then, only on the third press, does the block rotate – not one, but three times! Most infuriating.

Graphics are limited to a wire-frame representation of the well, with each of the blocks just one colour. It's a pity that there are no backgrounds, which, although totally useless, did provide some sort of incentive to reach the next level in *Tetris*.

The variation of games is something in which *Blockout* excels. Not only is the speed variable, but so is the size of the well. All the dimensions – depth, length, width – can be altered to suit your requirements. You are also able to customise the size and shape of the blocks which drop down the well. The simplest set of blocks is made up of basic 2-D blocks: one block thick, L shapes etc. Conversely, the top-of-the-range, no-nonsense set for professionals comprises blocks of all shapes and sizes, with lumps and protrusions in the most awkward places.



The two-player game would be great fun of it wasn't so slow. Like that other great Sega puzzle game, *Columns*, when you make a good clearance, your opponent is raised a few incomplete levels to make their task more difficult. Speed is of the essence here as the first to inflict rogue levels onto their opponent usually wins.

The blocks could also have been livened up, in the same way that *Columns* used multiple colours and designs to break from the single-colour, conventionally shaped norm.

Sound is similarly unimaginative. The effects are predictable but acceptable, consisting of higher pitched beeps as you progress further into the game. However, the major flaw in the sound department is the omission of a tune during play. Even the simplest of puzzle games has a ditty to listen to while you play, and the lack of one makes *Blockout* hollow by comparison.

Blockout has no more content that the original 16-bit computer versions. Why Sega owners are expected to play £10 extra for a conversion that doesn't even utilise the Mega Drive's extra capabilities is quite beyond me. A bit of a cop-out...

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MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✗ No animated backgrounds or shapes. ✓ Perspective is spot on.	72
SOUND ✗ Lacking a tune of any sort. ✓ Different pitches to indicate depth in well.	62
PLAYABILITY ✗ Far too slow in two-player mode. ✗ Mega Drive capabilities not utilised.	70
ELECTRONIC ARTS **£34.99 ● OUT NOW**	69

Er... no page bottom due to writer's block.

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STAR CONTROL

70

PLAYERS	2
STAGES	15
SKILL LEVELS	3
SUPPLIER	Dream Machines

Being a big fan of Russell Grant, Robin Wyles felt he was equipped to deal with any astrological problems

Let me transport you forward to the 27th century. Now imagine you are the commanding officer of The Alliance of Free Stars. Your job is to colonise those parts of the universe that other people haven't reached. By while away from home, you must also ensure that everything is safe back at the ranch. You see, your longtime rivals, the evil Ur-Quan Hierarchy, have inadvertently leaked information appertaining to an attack on your people. It seems that their attack is just one small part of a larger plan to colonise and inhabit the rest of the universe – just like you're trying to do.

Each of the forces, the Alliance and the Hierarchy, has seven ships at their disposal, developed by each of the alien races on their planets. Some are specifically built for attacking enemy ships, while others are just there to decoy and draw the enemy out of the way. The Practice and Melee options comprise one part of the game, the battle stage, while the full game also introduces extra strategy.

In Practice mode, you get to choose which fighter you wish to challenge and simply battle it out to the death. Going one step forward into Melee mode, you get the first true competition between the forces of the Alliance and the Hierarchy. You pick one of your seven ships to attack the enemy till either you run out of ships or the enemy's ships are destroyed. The winner is then treated to a fanfare and a summary of the ships remaining. Here you first encounter celestial bodies (i.e., planets) and gravity fields which act like black holes and try to suck you in.

Once you've braved the warm-up games, it's probably time for the Full Game, although this option should not be chosen

The Mmrnmhrm X-Formis (madeupname) is a pretty clever ship. It can change shape from a slow, powerful ship to a fast fighter capable of outrunning other craft.

The Syreen Penetrator has paltry missiles, but comes complete with a wily Syreen. This is a sound device that can lure the enemy from their warship and so lead them to their doom!

The Arilolalelay Skiff is a tiny vessel that has an incredibly high turning speed. It can reach its maximum speed instantaneously, making it the ideal ship against slow, cumbersome craft.

The Earthling Cruiser is a fairly slow vessel equipped with devastating homing missiles that are armed with nuclear warheads which can also take out enemy fire.

Louis XIV took just three baths in his lifetime...

This is the Practice mode, where one of your ships pits itself against one of the Ur-Quan's. The column on the right shows your ship's crew (energy) and the fuel (weapon power).

unless you are fully proficient at the combat stage. During this game, you must try to colonise and populate as many of the planets of the starfield as possible. Once populated they can be mined for minerals, which in turn create starbucks that can be spent on starbases. In these bases you can build extra warships which can be added to your fleet. And so the circle continues, till either all your fighters get knocked out or you colonise all the stars.

The two-player options allow for much customising. If you play in normal mode, one player controls the Alliance fleet while the other plays the Ur-Quans. You control all elements of play unless you chose either the Cyborg or Psytron mode. Cyborg means that you will make all the strategic decisions, leaving the fighting to the computer, while Psytron makes the game more exciting by getting rid of the strategy. By using these modes, combined with the Standard, Good and Awesome difficulty levels, *Star Control* has managed to avoid alienating any fan of either the strategy or arcade genre.

There are 15 starfields in all, with a different scenario for each. However, the overall threat of the Ur-Quans hovers ominously beneath all of the storylines. Each scenario will require a large amount of strategy; it is not as simple as killing everyone and then taking over the planets. This is certainly a strong point for a Mega Drive game and ensures that the game stays active for months.

Sadly, due to its original and very old PC design, *Star Control* looks very dull. Compensation for this comes with the great static screens which provide information throughout play. The sound effects are also impressive, with a claimed five megs of sampled sound in the cartridge. It's a pity, though, that some of this memory wasn't taken up with tunes which would liven up the empty atmosphere of the gameplay. Indeed, this is where *Star Control*'s main problem lies. Playing the strategy section is not as challenging as it should be, but boring and bland. It uses a very convoluted series of menus to execute a few, simple commands.

Star Control is not the same game you may have seen on the PC. This version has certainly been, er, simplified. Admittedly, it now has far greater appeal, but those expecting a deep, complex game will be either disappointed (if they're a strategy fan) or happy (if they're not) that they can now get their hands on a playable version of *Star Control*. There is certainly no other game like this on the Mega Drive, and that alone should warrant at least a look.

SEGA SICK OVER BALLISTIC BIG BITS

***Star Control* is the first game to come on a 12 megabit cartridge. This is possible because its producers, Ballistic, are not official third party licensees of Sega and therefore have not had to stick to Sega's maximum cartridge size of 8 megabits. Surprisingly, some sources have indicated that Sega aren't too happy at Ballistic's Mega Drive debut. Whether this is because Ballistic have designed a cartridge that is better than Sega's own, or because Sega are whinging because they haven't signed up Ballistic to produce official carts is unclear. Either way, a lot of people are going to want to get hold of this 12 megabit cart, especially Sega's official third party licensees.**

The Yehat Terminator is a fast and very manoeuvrable ship. It is equipped with a very high energy force field that makes the ship immune to enemy fire.

The Chenjesu Broodhome of the Alliance carries a large crew and plenty of fuel. The weapons are supplied via some very powerful crystal missiles.

The Shofixti Scout is a small, suicidal ship that can chase after the enemy and self destruct when it gets near.

MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✗ Dull backgrounds and sprites. ✓ Superb static pictures during game.	73
SOUND ✗ No music as you play. ✓ Great sampled effects and speech.	68
PLAYABILITY ✗ Tedious menus in the strategy game. ✓ Terrific fun in two-player mode.	72
BALLISTIC **£37.95 ● OUT NOW**	70

...none of them voluntarily.

DEVILISH

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	9
SKILL LEVELS	3
SUPPLIER	Dream Machines

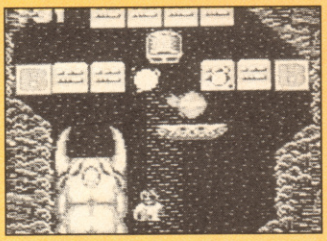
Robin Wyles wondered if the Game Gear could in fact be just an *Arkanoid* machine in disguise

Just a few releases into the Game Gear's life and it has already cloned one of its games. Chronologically, *Woody Pop* was the first *Break-Out* game to appear so *Devilish* could, technically speaking, be described as a *Woody Pop* clone. But after the initial disappointment of seeing that familiar bat and ball at the bottom of the screen, I was pleasantly surprised to find that *Devilish* is probably the best, most innovative *Break-Out* variant on any console.

Devilish consists of two bats stacked on top of each other. The bottom one behaves like a normal bat and moves along a horizontal plane, while the top one can move in all directions, even splitting up into smaller ones or turning 90°.

The main premise of *Devilish* is to direct a ball through a maze of obstacles – including walls, moving scenery, aliens, etc. The maze is made up of a massive scrolling area around which the ball must be directed (hence the turning bat). Bulldozer tactics are generally the best if you can control the ball with the movable bat and bash your way through walls.

Visually the game is very reminiscent of the PC Engine game *Devil Crash*, with tombstones and deformed corpses littering the backgrounds. Combined with the nine multi-directional scrolling play areas, this makes a very addictive and original *Break-Out* derivative.



GAME GEAR

GRAPHICS ✓ Detailed backdrops and sprites. ✓ Fast and smooth scrolling.	82
SOUND ✗ Effects are very average. ✓ Music throughout the game.	69
PLAYABILITY ✓ A bit easy on lower levels. ✓ Extremely addictive and original.	79
GENKI **£18.95 ● IMPORT**	80

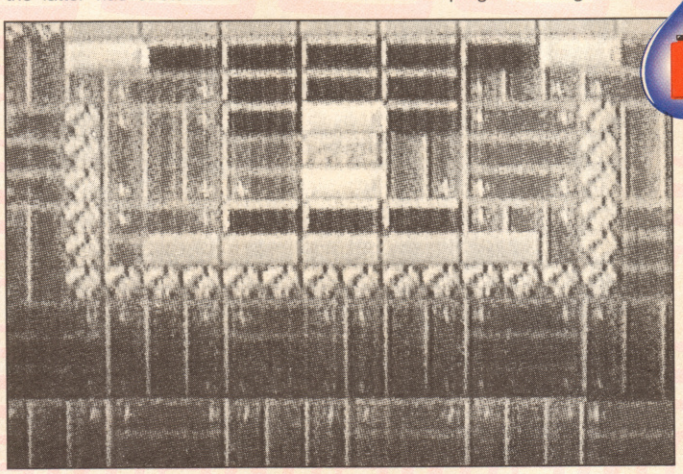
WOODY POP

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	50
SKILL LEVELS	3

Derek Slondisovich can't see the wood for the trees

Take a bat. Take a ball. Now place them in front of a massive wall of bricks. You have now created the most durable game genre to ever appear. Every single games machine ever created (even the ColecoVision!) has had its own version of the original *Break-Out* game. Indeed, the Game Gear now has two: this and *Devilish*. While the latter has stretched the *Break-Out* genre even further, *Woody Pop* has based its solid gameplay on tried and tested principles.

The basic *Break-Out* elements are prevalent throughout all the rooms of the castle through which you must progress. As you clear each room of bricks, you are then faced with a choice of doors to progress through. Each a value above it which equates to the amount of points you will win if you complete the room behind the door. Those who go for low-score rooms will get far but fail to receive the respect of others due to their embarrassingly low score.



Each room consists of many blocks. Blocks vary in content from normal disappearing ones to subborn bricks that require many hits and others which contain pick-ups. Other weird things also appear around the screen, like a train which trundles on and confuses the bounce of your ball.

GAME GEAR

GRAPHICS ✗ Simple and unimaginitive. ✗ Badly defined icons.	68
SOUND ✗ Effects hold few delights. ✗ Droning music.	65
PLAYABILITY ✗ Very repetitive and frustrating. ✓ Addictive to start with.	70
SEGA **£24.95 ● OUT NOW**	69

Cats can't taste sweet food. RAZE OCTOBER 1991

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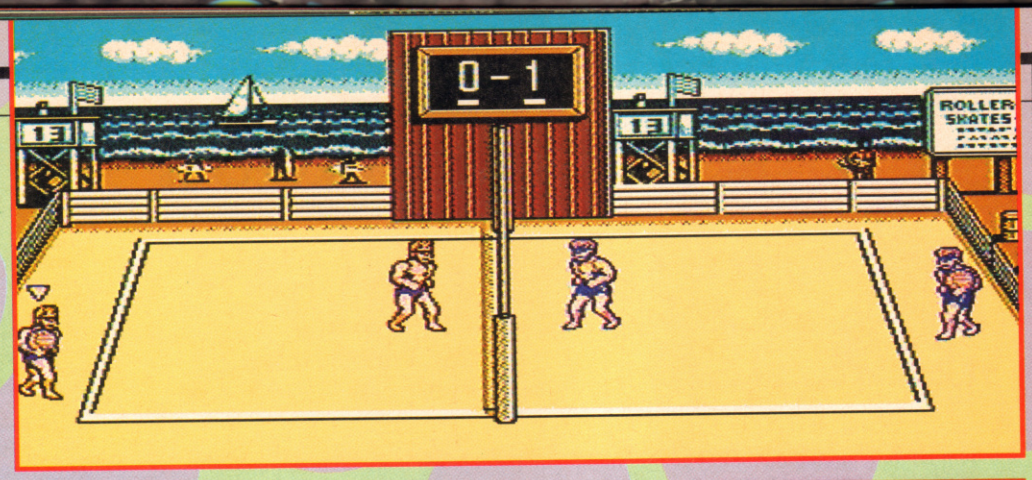


84

PLAYERS	4
STAGES	n/a
SKILL LEVELS	3

SUPER SPIKE V'BALL

The sun always shines on TV... Les Ellis found out why

Ahh, America, home of the free and land of such amazingly good weather that it makes you sick. Just look at the likes of Baywatch and Beverly Hills 90210, have you ever seen it rain in those programmes? I think not. It's because of such terrific weather that the buxom bronzed beauties (no, I don't mean David Hasselhoff and Jason Priestely) can frolic about in the sea with surf boards and jump around the sand playing volleyball. If you're one of the many beach bums who loves diving around the sand trying to impress the girls with your spike, then I think I have just the remedy (although a cold shower usually does the trick).

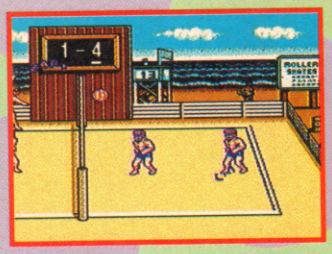
Super Spike V'ball has enough options to keep every hardened beach bum happy. You can either practise, compete in the American league or play in the World Cup. From there you choose which players you want in your team. There are four pairs available and each looks and plays differently to the others. These players must then choose which state they wish to represent.

Once all that's sorted out, you can allocate which humans control which players. Up to four players can compete simultaneously, but any combination can by used: two humans vs one human and one computer, two humans vs two computer, etc. Gameplay is very simple, with a little cross indicating where you should stand to receive an incoming ball. Computer team-mates are also quite accommodating, although you can in no sense relax.

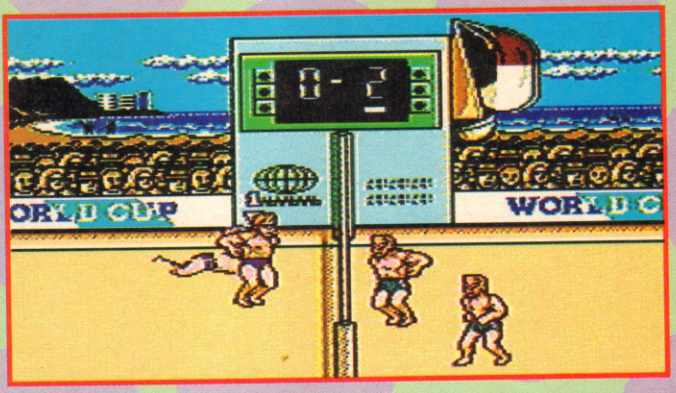
All the volleyball plays are included and are very easy to access, although the super spike takes some getting use to.

Super Spike V'ball is undoubtedly one of the more playable volleyball games around – far easier to control than *Beach Volley*. It's the combination of computer and human players on one side that keeps the frustration level low – if you cock up then your team-mate will usually help you out.

The use of the Four Score is also a boon for this type of game, and creates quite an atmosphere if you can find three friends to cram around the TV. Even though it would be nice to pop over to California, this is one sport that you can fully experience on your Nintendo.



Player one smashes the ball over the net but one of the opponents is set just right to receive it. He can now lay it up for his partner to spike back.



The first round of the World Cup is held in Japan. Not surprisingly, your hosts are pretty nippy around the court. But the Japanese aren't your only problem as it seems everyone in the world is better than you.

NES

GRAPHICS ✓ Manly sprites run, jump and dive around. ✓ Varying backgrounds and large play area.	81
SOUND ✗ Effects are mediocre. ✓ The in-game tune's pleasant and summery.	71
PLAYABILITY ✓ Easy to play yet very tough opposition. ✓ Brilliant multi-player fun.	87
NINTENDO **£29.99 ● OUT NOW**	**84**

The punishment for bigamy is two mothers-in-law.

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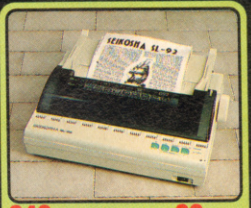

240 CPS DRAFT **80** COL
- *Seikosha SL-92AI - 24 pin - 80 col*
- *240cps Draft, 80cps LQ*
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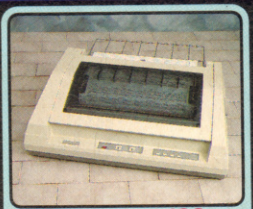

462 CPS DRAFT **136** COL
- *Seikosha BP-5500AI - 8 pin - 136 col*
- *462cps Draft, 106cps NLQ*
- *18K Printer Buffer*
- *Parallel and Serial Interfaces*
- *Graphics Resolution: 240×144dpi*
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RAVE

MARVEL

96

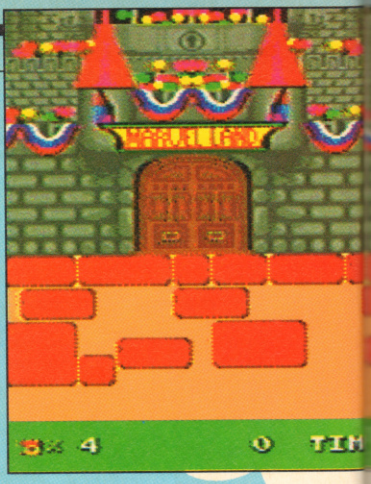
PLAYERS	1
STAGES	28
SKILL LEVELS	3
SUPPLIER	Dream Machines

Les Ellis found himself knee-deep in white powder

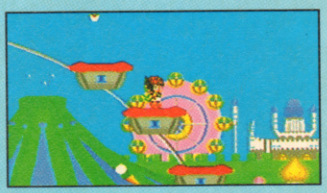
Nintendo and Sega have been going toe to toe with each other for many years. The latest slagging is between Mario and Sonic, with Zelda and Alex Kidd paling into insignificance when compared to these icons. But following on from all these "classic" characters and their games is *Marvel Land*, a real gem currently to be found in the grey market only.

Marvel Land is the ultimate place to live. It's a place full of rollercoasters, hot dog vans, cola rivers and people who keep telling you to "have a nice day". Marvel Land, as any inhabitant will tell you, is a great place to live.

Marvel Land was the visionary concept of four fairies. They cleaned up and renamed Marvel Land many years ago, and have subsequently been going around doing good deeds ever since. But all is not well in Marvel Land at the moment.

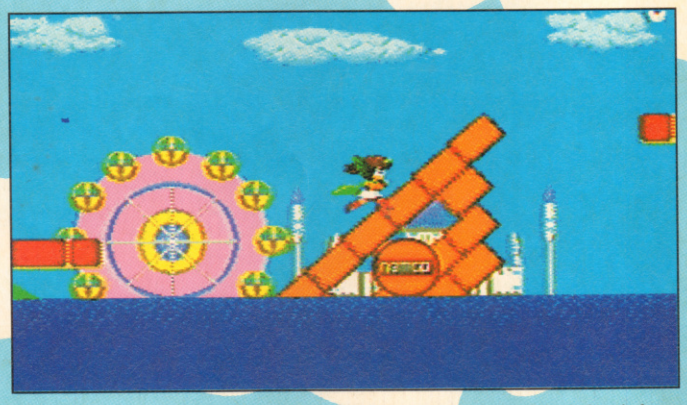


The shimmering effect is caused by the spin magic weapon which you have just picked up. If you initiate it, the weapon will spin around you and knock out anything it touches. The length of the line extending from you shortens with time. This is also useful for picking up bonuses in those out of the way places.



Looping the loop on the rollercoaster is a real treat to watch, but requires a cool head to play. Try to catch as many of the bonuses as you can whilst jumping over the small signs and ducking under the bigger ones. If you know how to play it, this level can be a points frenzy.

All the fun of the fair as you mount the big wheel in Marvel Land. Remember to duck or jump to avoid the rocket man coming towards you. If you jump high enough, you can land on the top of the rocket and go for a ride.

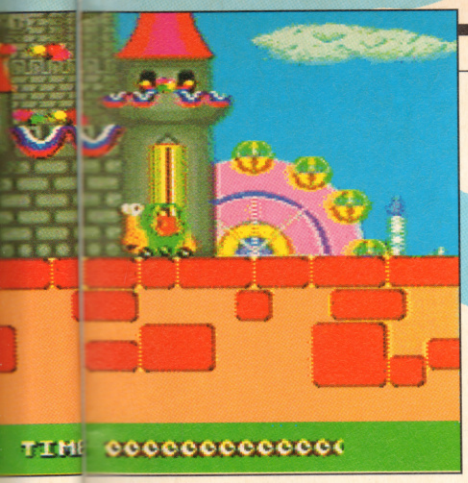


Oops, this was a rock steady platform before you stepped on it. That's what too many steaks and raw eggs can do for your weight. Just make sure you don't slip backwards into the water because even Marvel Man cannot swim in the icy waters of a Marvel Land under the powers of Wolfbreath. Jump from this platform onto the hopefully solid wall over there.

There is an evil force at work in the underground caverns of Marvel Land. This force is Wolfbreath, a vicious ruler of a gang of mutants. Wolfbreath and his gang of cronies were banished from Marvel Land many years ago for not having any sense of fun. In fact, Wolfbreath is an old misery guts and can't stand anyone else having the slightest bit of fun either.

But now this mouldy old spoil-sport isn't happy moping around with his dead-beat friends in the underworld. He has kidnapped Marvel Land's four fairies and is holding them captive in the castles of four minions. While they are away, the country of Marvel Land will no longer be a place of leisure. With the fairies absent, the cola has turned warm, the fun fairs are rusting up and the food vans are now selling hot videos

The plant four-o'clock is also called marvel-of-Peru.



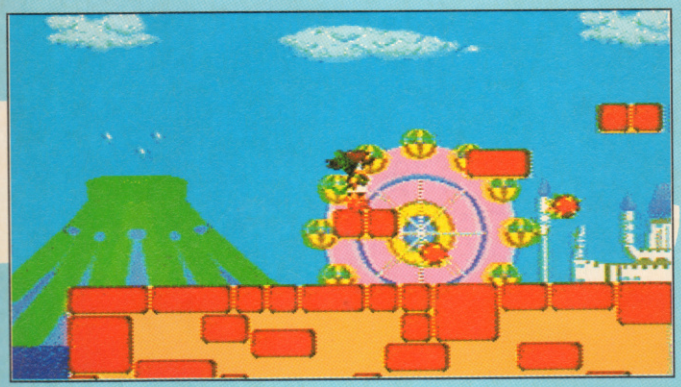
Marvel Land awaits your triumphant entry. As you burst through the doors, the first thing you'll meet is a strange elephant mutant – not the nicest welcome.

opening one of the many chests that are hidden about Marvel Land. Spin magic only lasts for a short period and reduces in power the longer you possess it.

Marvel Land consists of four basic worlds. Each world is split up into seven levels, all of which can be accessed via a password system. The password not only allows you to go straight to the level you died on, by also to directly access any of the previous levels. Clever stuff.

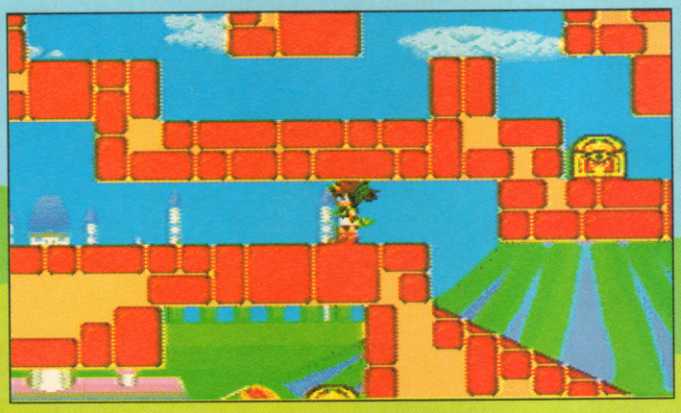
At the end of each level, you will having to return to the start of the seventh level again. These puzzle games can consist of anything from a fruit machine to a pipe system quandary where you have to save a fairy from getting drowned.

The sights and sounds of *Marvel Land* as shown in the map that pops up before the game starts.



Each world is based in a different part of Marvel Land and subsequently has varying backgrounds. For instance, the first world is based in the fairground, the second takes you over a castle, while the third goes through the streets and houses. All through these worlds are many hidden bonuses and level warps. Although you have to be careful, as sometimes you can discover the second door of a warp and be taken back to a previous part of the level. As in *Mario*, finding the warps is half the fun of the game.

Moving steadily through the tunnels, the saviour of Marvel Land is faced with a couple of choices: go back and find another route to the casket above, or plough on relentlessly to the end of the level. The bonuses below can be picked using the spin magic. Marvel Man has managed to pick up some Marvel Wings too but in this cramped space they are of no use to him.



instead of hot dogs.

Understandably, the people of Marvel Land are a tad miffed. So they send a young fire imp to find the all-powerful Marvel Man, owner of all the fun fairs, in the hope that he will help them. On hearing the news, Marvel Man is enraged at Wolfbreath and vows to rescue the four fairies and kill off the wolf man. The people of Marvel Land have never seen Marvel Man this furious, yet they are sure that he will save their land – especially as one of the fairies is his girlfriend!

You play the role of Marvel Man who has to trek through four treacherous worlds, each holding one of the fairies. The levels are swarming with Wolfbreath's mutant minions, but these can easily be disposed of by either jumping on their head or hitting them with your spin magic. The latter weapon can be found by confront one of Wolfbreath's minions who is holding a fairy captive. This minion will then challenge you to a puzzle game which will either result in you killing the minion, and thus rescuing the fairy, or you losing and

Marvel Land is what you would call "a refreshing change". While *Sonic* has been mooted as the big *Mario* basher, I would say that *Marvel Land* is much more akin to Nintendo's favourite brothers. Unlike *Sonic*, the further you get into the game, the more warps, bonuses and hidden rooms you come across. Every stage is entertaining and holds something new to accomplish. The whole game isn't based around the same type of gameplay, which means that you never get bored.

If you like games that look good and play for ever – and, let's face it, who doesn't? – then *Marvel Land* is the answer to your prayers. Move over Sonic, Marvel Man has arrived.

LAND

MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✓ The best backgrounds of any MD game. ✓ Hundreds of brilliant sprites.	96
SOUND ✓ Overly happy and jolly tune. ✓ Tons of original effects.	88
PLAYABILITY ✓ Non-linear routes in most levels. ✓ Loads of hidden extras enhance gameplay.	95
NAMCOT **£28.95 ● IMPORT**	96

Marvel powder is great raw!

PLAYERS	1
STAGES	3
SKILL LEVELS	1

THE SUPER SPY

Pulling on his silk James Bond trademark boxer shorts, Julian Boardman knew this was going to be another smooth day

This is a typical dialogue screen that will be found if you enter one of the rooms. Generally they're pretty useless but you will occasionally be given a sub-machine gun or have your wounds healed.

With his Mauser cocked, our eponymous, anonymous undercover agent (to be known as John from now on for story-telling purposes), silently stalked the corridors of the Tadoya Company factory. Little did he know, however, that about six million Japanese terrorists were silently (?) stalking him. They were there to wipe him out before he could destroy the bombs – cleverly disguised as oil drums – dotted around the factory.

As John wasn't quite expecting this sort of welcome, he has only one 12-shot clip, a throwing knife and his impressive muscular development to take on this army. Oh, he also has infinite continues (*c'est la vie!*).

The game is played from a first person perspective, as in *Op Wolf*. All you ever see of John are his arms, fists and whatever weapon he may be carrying. At his disposal he has two kinds of aggressive move, the obvious action with his weapons, i.e. punch, stab or fire, and the kick when he is using his fists or knife, or to take a swipe with the barrel of the gun if he is holding the Mauser.

Using these techniques, John has to first fight his way through the factory in an effort to destroy the ten bombs and kill as many of the terrorist perpetrators as he possibly can. On the way he can also rescue the innocent scientists from a flaming oblivion.

After clearing the factory, John must follow six escaping terrorists to the Tadoya Company head office in downtown Origami. The building of 15 floors (with an average of seven rooms on each floor) must then be searched for yet more bombs, this time disguised as coffee machines. Between all this, John faces a mighty army of well-armed and extremely hard men. All the guys John encounters come armed to the teeth with all manner of weapons; some have knives others have machine guns, some even have screwdrivers and spray cans, both of which will be directed at your head!

Obviously, this all gets to sound very much like *Op Wolf*, but it isn't. Accuracy is not essential in *The Super Spy*, you just have to be in front of a bad guy and it is very easy to hit them. Generally, they require more than one hit, although using the gun is obviously more effective than a tap on the forehead. *The Super Spy* is also much more claustrophobic than *Op Wolf*, with the action often far too close for comfort (when did you last get head-butted by a video game?). The graphics are great, with large sprites, smooth scrolling, the usual astounding stuff, but the sound it strangely poor. Whereas most Neo•Geo games pack in speech where it's welcome but not necessary (using the seven built-in speech channels), *The Super Spy* has loads of dialogue displayed onscreen but no speech to accompany it.

This is undoubtedly one of the more challenging Neo•Geo games, even with its infinite continues. Some Neo•Geo games can be completed in 20 minutes, but *The Super Spy* will need at least two hours non-stop play (that's VERY big for a beat-'em-up). If you love nothing better than excessive violence, then *The Super Spy* is just the ticket (although try to limit yourself to ten continues – just for the hell of it).

Very clever, Mr Boardman. But not clever enough.

ARMS FOR ARMS' SAKE

Your fists. Basic weapon and the only one that does not deplete in strength.

The pistol. This comes with a 12-shot clip, and you only get one per life.

The Ingram. Compact (and bijou) but can wipe out anything in its path with ease. Again, only 12 bursts of fire allowed.

The knife. Causes more damage than your fists, but soon becomes bloody and redundant.

NEO-GEO

GRAPHICS ✗ Some backgrounds are needlessly dull. ✓ Big, colourful characters.	85
SOUND ✗ No speech synthesis. ✓ Really gruesome effects.	81
PLAYABILITY ✗ A little repetitive at times. ✓ More violence than should be legal.	84
SNK £128 ● OUT NOW	83

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NINJA COMBAT

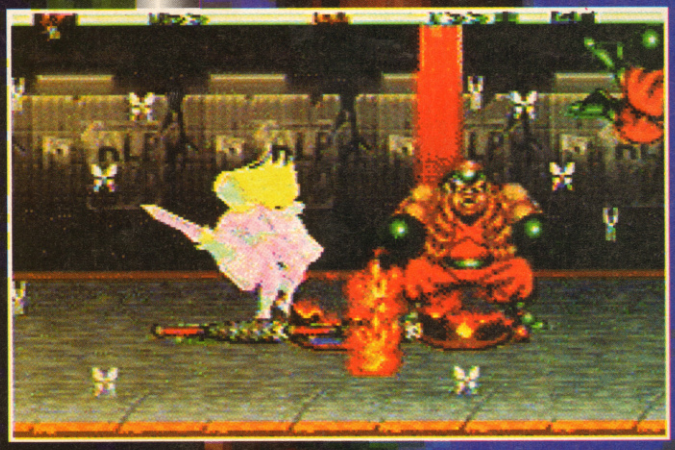
Midway through the first level you will become entangled in a big scrap with these three sword-wielding blokes. One of them goes by the name of Musashi (sounds familiar?), and if you defeat him he will realise the error of his ways and join your party.

Julian Boardman raided the petty cash tin to get hold of this review copy

PLAYERS	2
STAGES	7
SKILL LEVELS	1
SUPPLIER	De Gale Mktg.

Ninjas are a strange breed: enigmatic, silent and constantly disappearing in a puff of blue smoke. Not to mention the fact that they all eat boiled spinach and noodles for a living. Still, we can't hold a cast iron digestive system against them.

The ninjas in this particular case are not as mysterious as your usual run-of-the-mill ninja; they go by the names of Joe and Hayabusa (if you remember, Hayabusa was the name of the guy in *Shadow Warrior* aka *Ninja Gaiden*).



Pah! Looks a bit feeble, but these butterflies are the Ninja Magic emanating from a certain slim, energetic girl who joins you. This weapon, combined with the young lady's quick, nimble moves, makes her one of the best – and kinkiest – characters to control.

The scenario, though, is definitely your average ninja fare. Basically these two guys are out to rid their city of an evil force, situated in an old Japanese temple. This will, of course, involve a large amount of shuriken throwing, jumping and beating the crap out of everyone in a black Shell suits (honest). As well as your shuriken fodder in Shell suits, there are some stronger characters which are generally one of two things, fat or tall, and they will all be a bit Steven Seagal (i.e., Hard to Kill).

The way through the town and the temple is frequented by the odd oil barrel or two which, when destroyed, will reveal a power-up and an extra weapon. They are usually more powerful than your standard shurikens but don't have the range, leaving you with a trade-off: range versus power.

A little piece of narrative where the huge guardian who lurks in the subway stops the train on which you are riding. There are plenty of this sort of sequence throughout the game, as well as a very long end sequence when you inevitably complete *Ninja Combat*.

As you trek through the first four levels, you will also come across abnormally strong characters midway through the level. Each of these characters has their own special talent, which they will initially use against you as they are under the spell of the head honcho at Evil Ninja PLC. However, should you defeat them, they will realise the error of their ways and come to join your party as you try to get into the temple and defeat the Managing Director. This means that you can utilise their character, along with their strengths and weaknesses, instead of inflicting more pain on Joe and Hayabusa.

The graphics are undoubtedly better than any other console beat-'em-up (although *Final Fight* comes damn close), but I still think the Neo•Geo could do better. Sound is also well up to the usual arcade standard, with super speech when the characters talk to each other and loads of grunts and groans as characters get pummelled by opponents.

Like nearly all other Neo•Geo games, *Ninja Combat* comes with obligatory infinite continues (not even an option!). This makes the gameplay gradually more of a nuisance the further you get into the game. The challenge is lost because you know that dangerous situations aren't things that have to be avoided. Even so, everyone in the office has gone back to *Ninja Combat* over and over again despite the fact that completing the game is inevitable. A superb beat-'em-up, but why is the Neo•Geo relying on ten-year-old game formats?

NEO GEO

GRAPHICS ✓ Sensational colour, movement and detail. ✓ Wide variety of enemy minions and backgrounds.	94
SOUND ✗ Sadly there's no in-game tune. ✓ Mind-blowing effects; superb speech.	91
PLAYABILITY ✗ Easily finished due to infinite continues. ✓ The basic animal instincts are catered for.	82
SNK **£128 ● OUT NOW**	84

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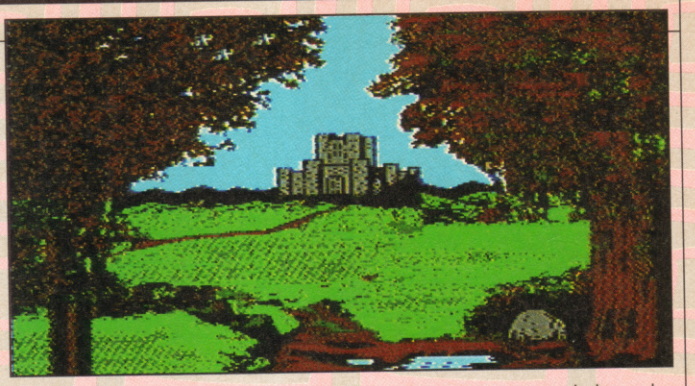
EURO CARD

MASTER CARD

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

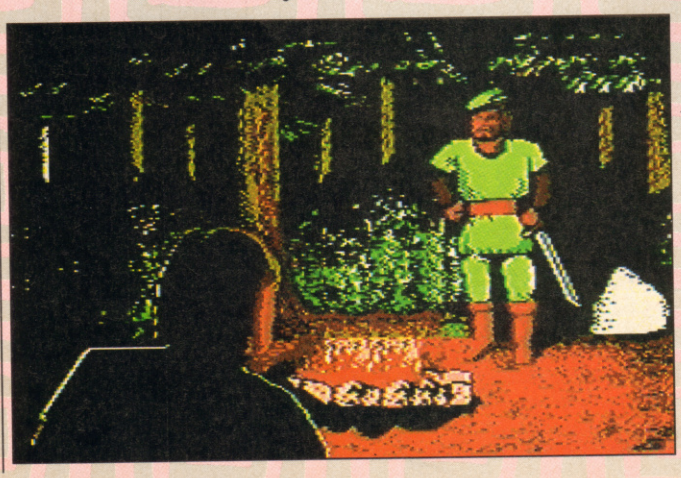
On the Nintendo? Les Ellis couldn't believe it. Someone mentioned playability, too!



Old England has a disease. That disease is crime. But there's a new guy in town, his name's Robo... er, no, hang on a moment. This is England of the 12th century. 1149 AD to be exact. *Very* old England.

News has just reached the country that the King has been killed while on a crusade in the Holy Land. Now England is in the throes of a civil war as the leaders of both the Normans and Saxons fight it out to rid the country of the other. You are placed on the side of the Saxons, a fun-loving folk descended from the Germans of the fifth century.

The Saxons currently have control of the north, while the Normans conveniently hold the southern territories. As a Saxon lord, you must try to gain the trust of the other Saxons and spread your people southwards.



Robin Hood invites you over for a barby in Sherwood Forest. Now is your chance to ask for his help in crushing the Normans' domination of southern England.

However, you'd be wise to remember that your fellow Saxons are a backstabbing, power-hungry race, and not even they can be trusted.

After choosing the Saxon lord you wish to play – there are four, each with their own attributes – you are shown the position of your home castle on a map of England. You now have three options. You can trek off with your armies and try to overthrow adjoining territories. Or you may feel like organising a jousting tournament to eye up the competition. But perhaps a bit of raiding on an opponent's castle is more your thing.

This is the main map of England showing who owns what. The Normans' territory is indicated by the little red shields. Your land is shown by the blue shields. You can only invade those counties adjoining your present position, which is indicated by a small horse. Once you've cleared the Normans out of the country, you must turn around and start attacking your fellow Saxons for total control of England.

If you choose the conquest path then you will need to assemble and supply an army. The more men you transfer into your army then the more likely you are to win battles. However, use too many men and you will leave your own land inadequately defended. Extra men can be purchased, of course, but trained soldiers don't come cheap. Neither do knights, catapults and castles, all of which can strengthen your position.

As a recreational break, you might like to organise a jousting tournament (which will cost you five gold pieces). Here you invite all the lords around you to your castle in a competition for fame (to increase your leadership qualities) or land. If you survive the first part of the event, the jousting, you can continue to battle for riches in the second half of the contest, the morning star. But where does all this money to pay for armies and tournaments come from? Well, most of it can be earned from the taxes you impose on the people on your land, but some can be "obtained" through more underhand tactics. The best way to get a lot of money very quickly is, quite obviously, to steal it from someone else. By raiding an enemy castle, you can plunder untold riches like gold and jewellery, all of which will go far in helping your war effort. But the other lords don't just leave their castle portcullises up, you will have to show some fine swordplay if you're to get past the four guards protecting the loot at each location.

If the petty cash tin is running a bit low, and you can't wait for the next load of taxes to come in, it's probably best to pop around to a neighbour's castle and rob them. But your swordplay will need to be superb as each castle holds three guards and their captain.

Apart from the three main stages, there are a few other extra sections that will aid the cause. By going to Sherwood Forest you can enlist the help of Robin Hood, who will help you attack the enemy just three times. Also, once during every game you will be given the opportunity to rescue a damsel in distress. Don't blow your only chance as she will do wonders for your morale.

It's heartening to see that the NES version of *Defender of the Crown* is more playable than the original Amiga version. The visual presentation is also superb – possibly the best of any NES game. Why it took so long to appear is a bit of a mystery, but those who purchased the original version will be intrigued to see what an excellent job Palcom have done with the 8-bit game. NES games just get better and better.

NES

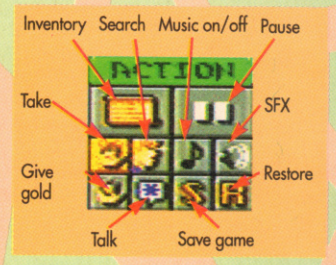
GRAPHICS ✓ Beautiful castle illustrations. ✓ Brilliantly detailed action scenes.	92
SOUND ✓ Music almost identical to Amiga version. ✓ Great atmospheric tunes play throughout.	85
PLAYABILITY ✓ More action than the Amiga version. ✓ Super mix of strategy and arcade.	85
PALCOM **£39.99 ● OUT NOW**	**86**

Knights in white satin?

THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

"I ain't no fairy, man!" exclaims Robin Long

The name *The Faery Tale Adventure* conjures up an image of a children's bedtime story book, colourful pictures and large print. EA's latest mythical release starts with "Once upon a time..." but whether it will end happily ever after is entirely dependent on you. Three brothers were once happy and carefree, but now their village is being tormented by an evil necromancer. Crops are failing and people are starving. For years the village had been protected by a lucky talisman, but now the overlord has snatched it from the village and taken it to far away lands. The brothers' father has already ventured forth to reclaim the talisman, but after returning battered and bruised, their father soon died. Now the three brothers are to set out and avenge their father's death.

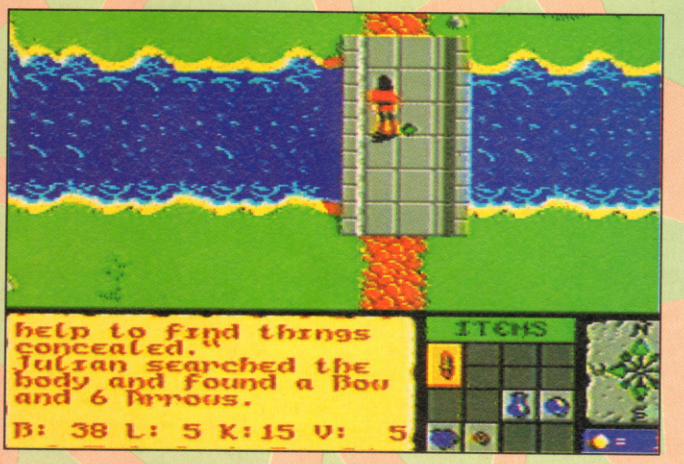


You've only just begun your adventure when you come across an old man standing on the side of the road. This wise old man can give you much information regarding the talisman, so don't kill him just yet.

You start by playing the oldest of the three brothers, who you first meet exploring his village for clues of where the talisman might be. The village is the best place to stay at the start, because there are no monsters and it gives you a chance to play with the controls. As soon as you set foot outside the village, you will meet general monsters of the countryside along with minions of the necromancer. Between your fights for survival, you must also try to glean information from any other characters you meet along the way. Some will be totally hopeless, but most will either give you some advice or set you a task that will help you along.

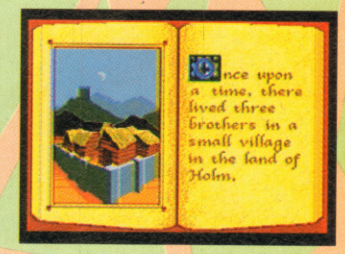
with a small weapon so the first thing to do is to find a decent sword. However, it's best not to spend money on one, but more preferable to kill a monster and nick his. Save your money for buying food, which is used to revitalise you.

Although *The Faery Tale Adventure* is certainly not everyone's cup of tea, it is the usual sort of RPG fare you would expect from its authors New World Computing. One good point is that the controls are very easy to use, with no menus to get completely lost in. However, its main problem is that you spend ages slowly walking around doing bugger all, which can get very tedious.



Here you are standing on a bridge contemplating a swim when you find a beautiful green gem; these come in handy for when you are left in the dark.

This is where the quest begins, in your own village of Tambry. From here you can wander around exploring the various buildings collecting useful items. The village is the only safe place in the adventure.



There's some excellent presentation at the beginning of the game.

Your character has four different attributes which are affected by your type of play: bravery points can be increased by slaying many monsters; luck points ensure that your guardian angel will bring you back to life if you die; vitality can drop substantially if you get hit by a monster you're fighting; and kindness depends on how generous you are towards the many beggars etc that you meet.

Along the way, you'll also find lots of items to pick up. You only begin

MEGA DRIVE

GRAPHICS ✗ Colourful, but poor animation. ✓ A few humorous touches.	70
SOUND ✗ Few spot effects. ✓ Music grates after a while.	53
PLAYABILITY ✗ Hard to get into. ✓ Controls are easy to use.	72
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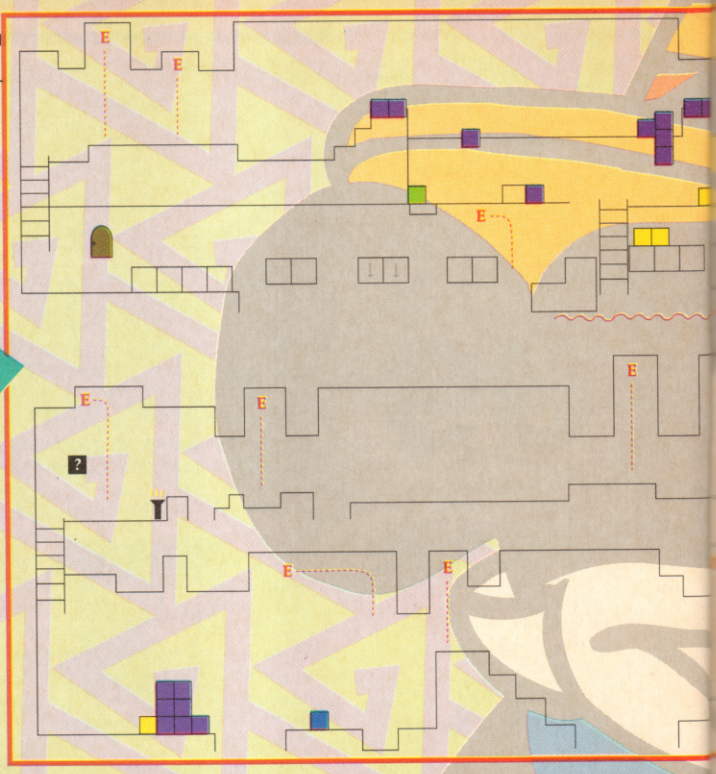
Faery or Faerie is often given to the name of the land of the fairies (or faeries).

HACKS AND STACKS



Hold on tight. Get ready for eight pages packed with tricks, tactics, playing guides and underhand dodges to the top games on every console available. Dominating this month is the ubiquitous Sonic the Hedgehog. Turn to page 68 now for the start of four pages almost entirely devoted to everyone's favourite truck fodder. Further on in Hacks & Stacks you'll find a complete guide to The Simpsons on the NES, complete with a super WalkThrough™.

Don't forget, RAZE is the only magazine dedicated to ALL consoles, bringing you ALL the latest tips from ALL over the world. We have the technology – and we know how to use it!

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MICKEY MOUSE

Game Gear

Steven Rae of Beckenham, Kent, sent in this excellent playguide to the last level of Sega's portable *Mickey Mouse*. For all his effort, Steven receives a free Game Gear cart. Anyone else who sends in similarly impressive solutions on any console game will almost certainly get a cart for their troubles.

The Dragon

When you first fall into the room you will see ten blocks to your left. Now walk along and stand on the third block from the end; it should fall through taking you with it. Now don't panic because the dragon will fire bullets everywhere. After you have calmly dodged these, pick up the block to your right. While you are carrying the block, jump onto the platform in the centre of the room. Now hurl the block at the dragon's head and quickly drop down onto the floor and again pick up the block you just threw. Just dodge the dragon's fire and chuck the block at him five more times.

Miribel The Witch

If you survived the wrath of the evil dragon, you will meet Mirabel. Luckily, she does not pose too much of problem, but the same cannot be said of her two red balls that fly around the screen.

Grab the torch in the middle of the screen and jump onto one of the raised platforms (the one on the right-hand side is usually the best). Chuck the torch at the witch, then make a hasty retreat and wait until the torch drops. Pick up the torch again and repeat the process around five times. Now sit back and watch the end sequence – and hope your batteries don't run out!

MS PAC-MAN

Atari Lynx

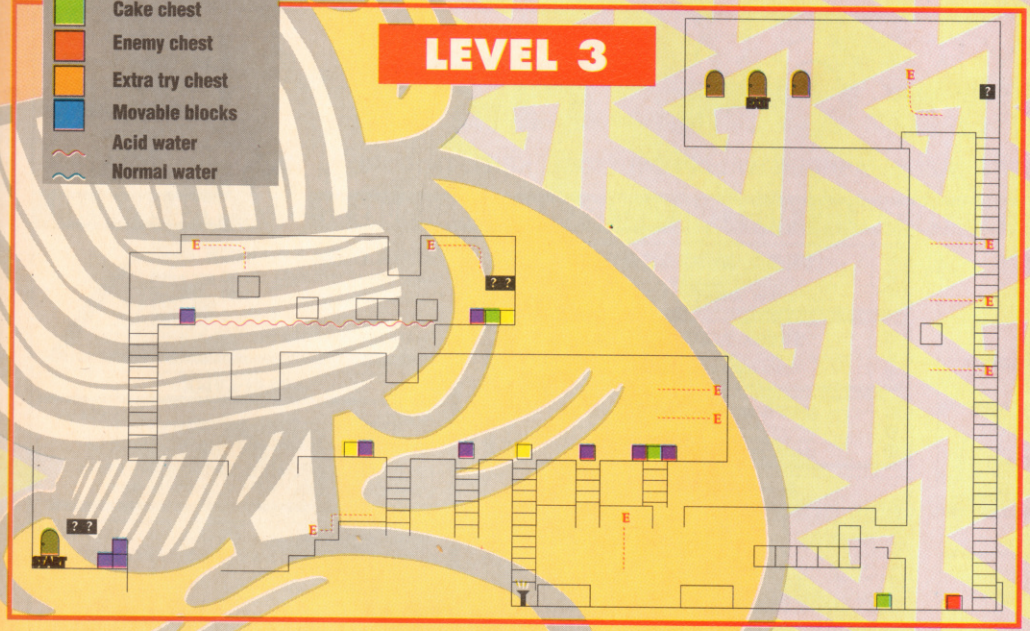
Most tried and tested Pac strategies work, so if you have any old books or magazines dig them up. However, following are Lynx specific tricks and tactics.

- If you're having trouble using the Lynx joypad to play Ms Pac-Man, try to anticipate where you'll be turning and push the joypad in that direction ahead of time.
- You travel slower while eating dots. If ghosts are hot on your trail, you may want to head down a corridor you've previously cleared.
- Ghosts travel slower when they go through side tunnels. If a ghost is chasing you, head to a tunnel and you'll buy yourself a some time.
- If there are some dots on the left side of the screen, do this. Go to the right side of the screen and wait until the ghosts head in your general direction. Go through the tunnel and you'll gain yourself a couple of seconds before they start moving to the left side of the maze. The reverse strategy can also be done if the dots are on the right side.
- Wait until you've got three or four ghosts on your tail before you go for a power pill. This way you can gobble more of the ghosts while you're powered up.
- If you manage to grab the lightning speed boost, save it until you only have a couple of dots left. Trying to negotiate the maze at speed is very difficult.
- The bigger mazes are actually easier to clear than the standard mazes because once you draw the ghosts to one side of the maze, you have more time to clear dots before they return to your side.

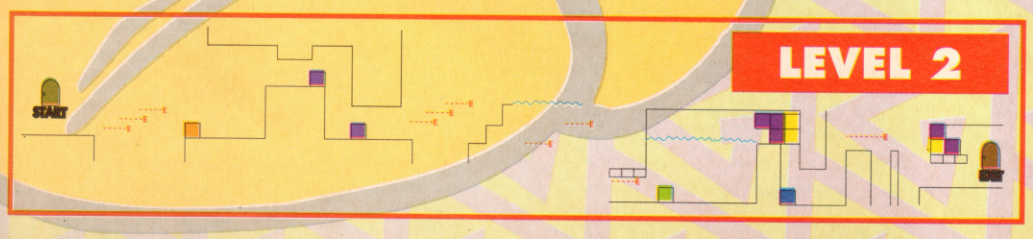
LEVEL 1

- Enemy and its path.
- Key
- Torch
- Door
- Mystery block
- Normal block
- Money chest
- Cake chest
- Enemy chest
- Extra try chest
- Movable blocks
- Acid water
- Normal water

LEVEL 3



LEVEL 2



NES BUSTERS

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Anybody know about a secret level on Bubble Bobble? Chris Gasayne from Pelyist(?) in Cornwall does. He says that if you get to level 99 (using the level codes printed last issue), get player two to collect the crystal ball and a little gate will appear near the bottom of the screen inside a gap. Player one must kill all the nasties and get to the top-left corner of the screen. He then has to jump right and fall down the screen. You should land in the gap and be transported to level A0.

BLADES OF STEEL

Fancy playing this without any goal keepers. Well Chris (again) reckons that if you press buttons A and B simultaneously on both pads and then press START on pad one, you begin the game without any goal keepers. Quite what good that does is a mystery to me, too.

RAD RACER

Craig Selwood from Stockport has been busy. He says that you should select a car and press START. Look at the speedo then press B to select a level. Two blocks means level one, four means level two and so on. To continue on the same level press START while holding down A.

BIONIC COMMANDO

Now a strange tip from the equally strange Stephen Worthy of Eton College in Windsor. To destroy the albatross that shoots fire down at you, swing up to the top-right and shoot at the red glowing shape. Now get Hal's bazooka and swing down towards the helicopter. Aim for the tiny cockpit. You only get one shot so make it count!

DOUBLE DRAGON 2

Darpan Thakur from Bombay, India, says that to skip a mission just hold down SELECT and press button A. If you press SELECT and button B, your opponent will disappear.

GREMLINS 2

It's that Fenech kid again. Old Dumbo has now got a tip for beating the last boss. Go behind the Spider Gremlin to kill him because he cannot fire backwards. Till next month, rockers!

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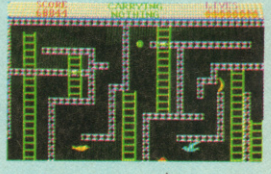

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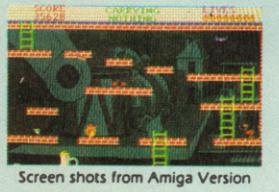

Screen shots from Amiga Version

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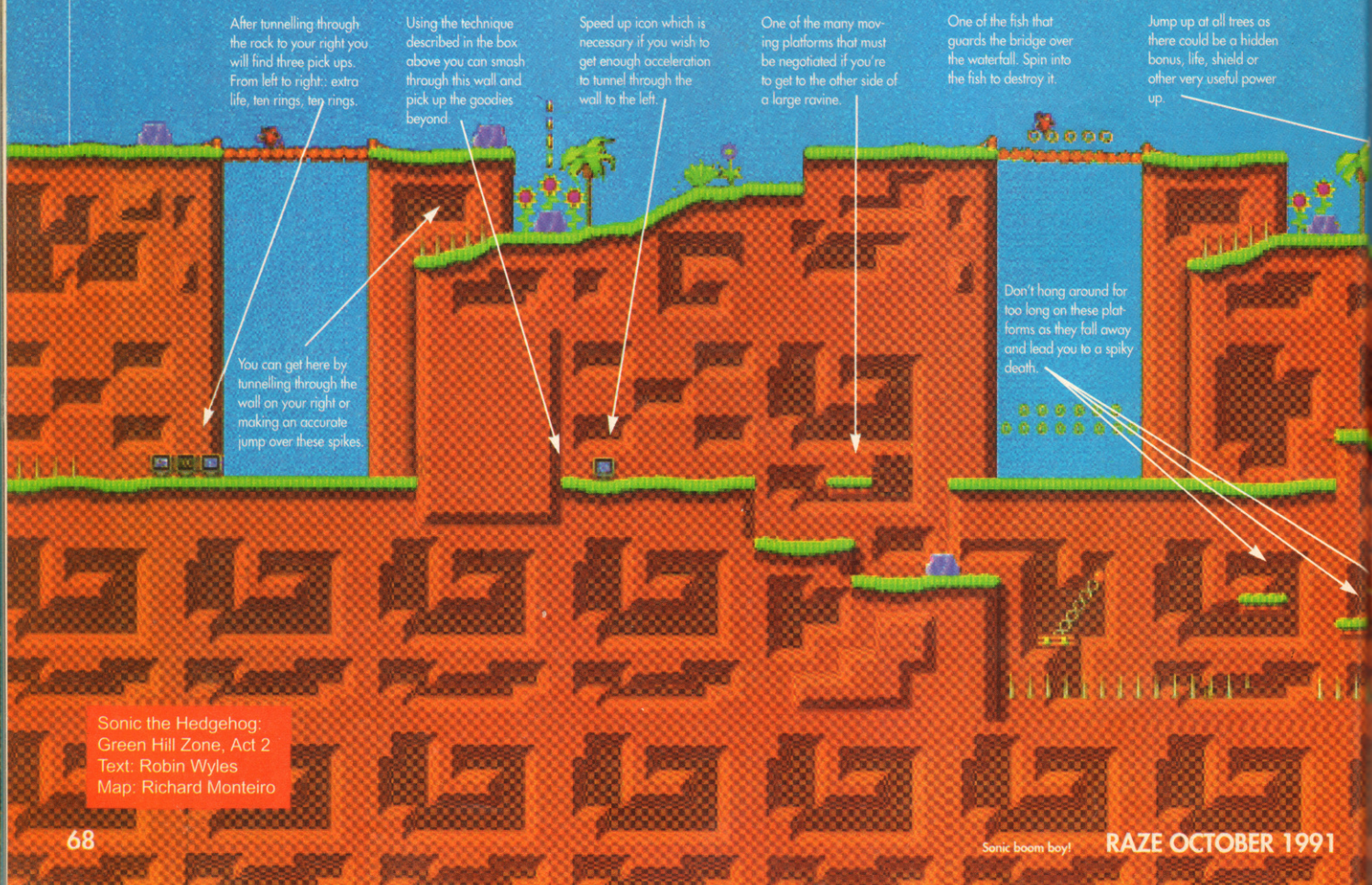
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Level selects, bonus stages, hidden lives, secret rooms, special tactics, winning manoeuvres – you'll discover everything you need to win at *Sonic the Hedgehog* and plenty more besides in this exclusive fact packed guide to Sega's smash game.

SONIC THE MOLE

Bet you didn't know that some of the walls on level one can be bashed through by Sonic! You can spot bashable walls by their rather lose tiles. To actually bash through such a wall, you have to go into turbo mode. This is achieved by pressing down on the joypad. Of course, you've got to be running reasonably quickly for your spin to be effective. With enough speed and a supersonic spin, walls will literally disintegrate in front of your eyes. Sonic's mole-like tendencies are put to best use in act 2 where you can gain 20 rings and a shield if you bash apart the correct piece of wall . The map below shows you exactly how to do this. There are also walls that you can bash through on later levels, but unfortunately there is no way of telling them apart from normal ones. It's a case of bash and see!



Sonic the Hedgehog: Green Hill Zone, Act 2
Text: Robin Wyles
Map: Richard Monteiro

Secret bonus stage

Julian Boardman said in his review of Sonic last issue that "rings a happy hedgehog make." That saying certainly rings true and it should be obeyed at all times if you wish to enter a bonus stage at the end of each act. By collecting 50 or more rings during an act, you'll get to see a huge spinning ring at the end of the act. Collect this and you enter the

bonus stage. This is easier said than done because sometimes you are travelling at such high speed that you shoot right off the edge of the screen and miss the lovely bonus section. When you are actually in the bonus stage it's best to stay in it for as long as possible as an extra continue will be yours if you collect 50 or more rings.

Sonic gets airborne

There are absolutely loads of rings that are just waiting to be discovered in the Green Hill Zone – most of them are found way up in the sky. The best way to reach them is by using the many moving platforms that are also lurking in the clouds. Careful timing is needed to find them because they only appear when you are in certain places, and as they are moving they can be easily missed. A good technique to employ when searching for extra rings is just to leap from the highest platforms... ensure you make a safe landing though!

Extra Sonics

Additional lives always come in handy, so it is just as well that there are a couple to find in the Green Hill Zone. The trouble is you can lose more lives trying to reach them. Luckily we are here to help you with the definitive guide to 1-up grabbing. The best way to reach them if they are up high is to use one of the many spring-loaded platforms that litter the highways and by-ways of Sonic's green and pleasant pasture. Sometimes the correct spring must also be found; a fine example of this is on act 2 where you have to traverse moving platforms and swings that lie way down in the bowels of the level just to find the spring that will boost you up to that evasive extra life!

Expropriating emeralds

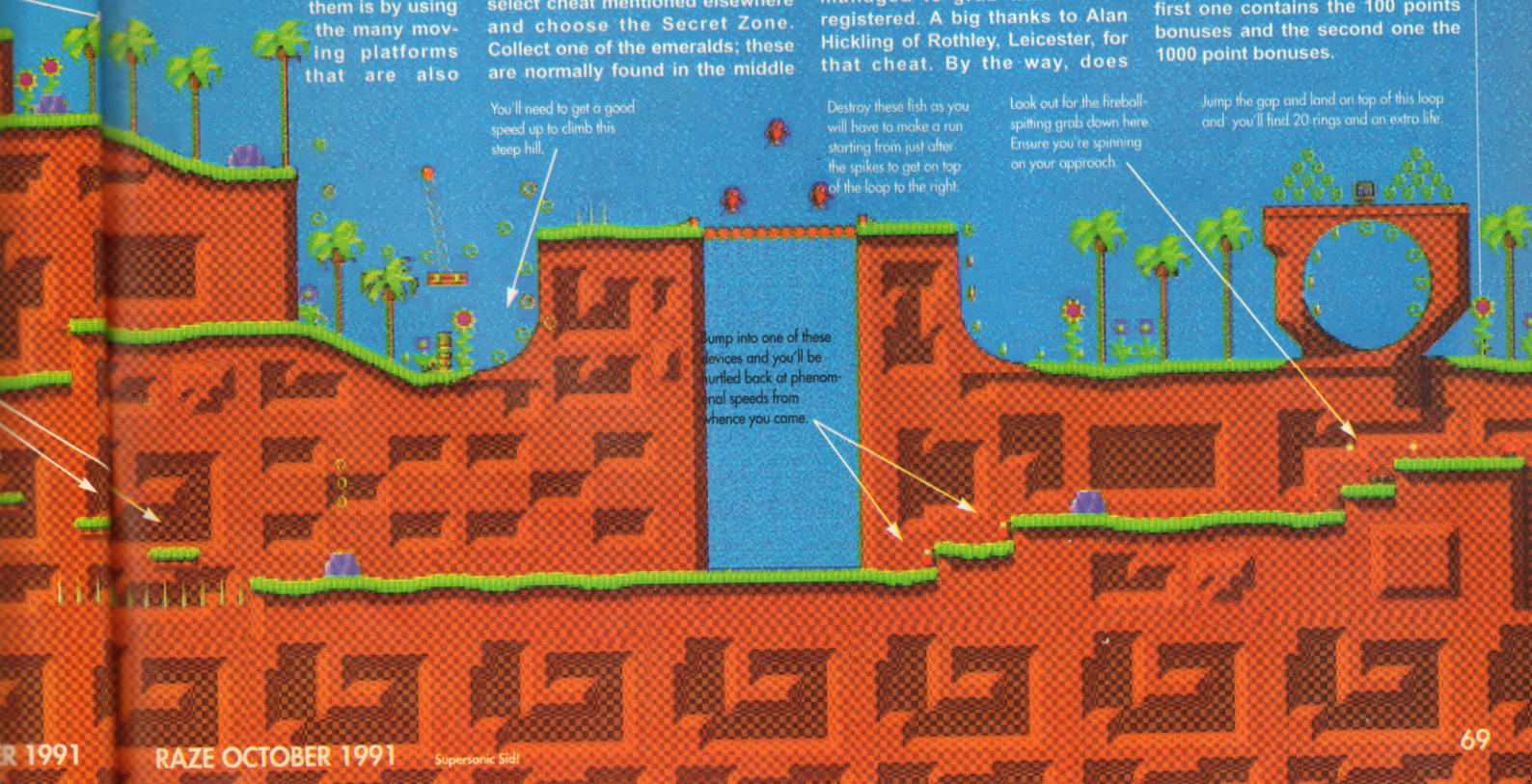
Yes, those six elusive emeralds can be yours if you use this cunning method. Use the level select cheat mentioned elsewhere and choose the Secret Zone. Collect one of the emeralds; these are normally found in the middle of a square of blocks. You have to keep bouncing against the blocks to make them disappear. Then, when you have it, the screen will turn white. While the screen is white press the reset button. Now go back into the level select screen and again choose the Secret Zone. Do exactly the same as before, remembering to reset the game when the screen turns white. If you repeat this six times, the six emeralds will be yours. Don't worry if you miss one of the emeralds as you can reset the machine and try again. The emeralds you have so far managed to grab will still be registered. A big thanks to Alan Hickling of Rothley, Leicester, for that cheat. By the way, does anyone know what happens once all the emeralds are in your possession? Do write in.

Sonic barks up the tree

If by any chance you don't manage to collect 50 rings, you can still bag some extra points that lie at the end of every act. All you have to do is to jump around when you pass the spinning sign and a few 100 points or even 1000 points bonuses will appear. But it is a lot easier to find them if you know where to jump. For example, on the Green Hill Zone they are found in the trees; the first one contains the 100 points bonuses and the second one the 1000 point bonuses.

TAKE A SUPERSONIC TRIP THROUGH ALL THE LEVELS

If you're still having trouble with *Sonic* after all the help that we have given you then you can always cheat! Although RAZE does not condone cheating in any way, we thought that just this once we would take pity. So, without further ado, here is way of accessing the level you wish to start on. On the title screen (the one with Sonic's bonce through the hoop) you must press the controller joypad in the directions UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT. If the cheat has worked you will hear a bell. Hold down button A and press START. You should now see the screen shown below. Simply move the joypad up or down to select the level and then press start. Easy ,eh? Incidentally, if you find any more of Sonic's secrets, don't keep them to yourselves: send them in to Hacks & Stacks, RAZE, Newsfield Ltd, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW. There are big cart prizes up for grabs.



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

MS BUSTERS

WONDER BOY 3

Having difficulty getting those nasties? Feel in need of Sadam's weapons supply? Well, here's how to get more armoury. Stand in front of the door that is to the left of the chest on the third lower level of the main tower. Jump and press UP on the control pad. While you are in the air, the top of the door will open. If you enter it, you will find yourself in a very respectable weapons emporium. Thanks to Robert Hewlett of Hitchin for that one.

MICKEY MOUSE

Yes, it's time to dust off that old cart and whop it in your MS because now there is a new way to complete level one. Kevin Timberlake of Hemel Hempstead reckons that there is a secret passage that appears if you do the following. Go down the first ladder on level one and towards the left end of the cage. Now bounce on the first of the two rocks after the butterfly. You should fall through a secret passage that will deposit you further on in the level.

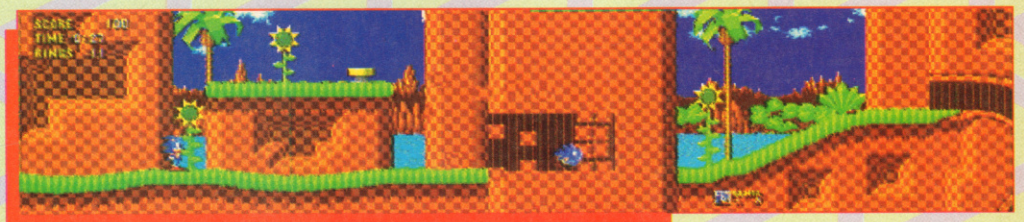
GHOSTBUSTERS

Fancy getting rich quick? Here's how to get a fat wad of cash in Ghostbusters. All you have to do is enter the code AA - 1173468723. Simon Ayley of Swanscombe, Kent sent in that so thank him not us. Keep bustin!

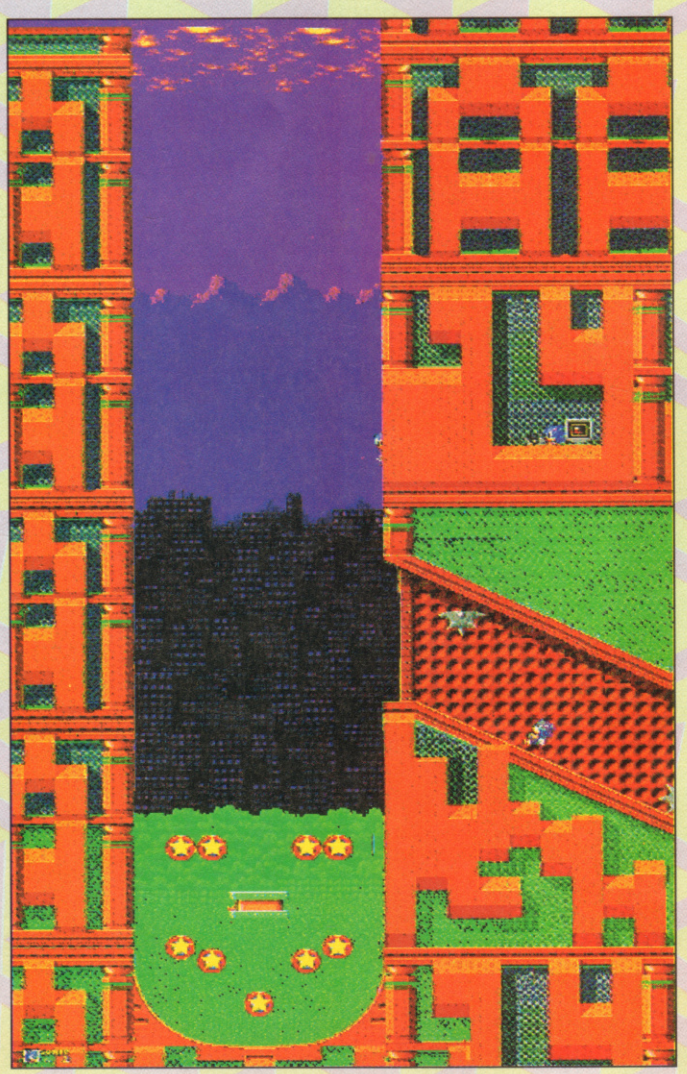
GAIN GROUND

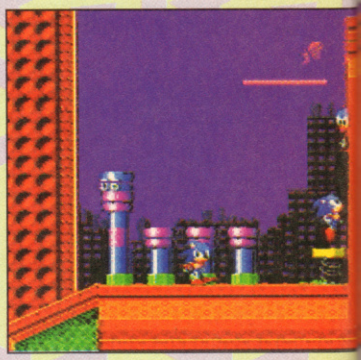
Not able to gain enough ground? Well try this tip for starters. Before turning on your Master System, hold down buttons 1 and 2. As soon as you switch on, press UP on the control pad. The menu screen will now appear and then the screen will go blank. After a couple of seconds the cheat mode will be activated and you will be able to play on the very last stage and have infinite lives.

THE HIDDEN ROOMS

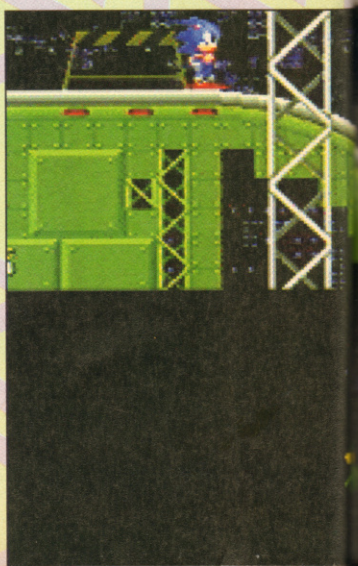


While the Green Hill Zone doesn't exactly test your abilities to the full, it's packed with hidden sections and shortcuts. For instance, if you take the lower of the two routes on act 3 then you will eventually find yourself at the screen shown above. All you have to do is to take a long run up and then while you are running push down so that you go into the supersonic spin attack mode. If you don't clear a path straight through, you can turn around and try again. Of course, you could always use the spring to fly over the obstruction, but it isn't nearly as much fun.

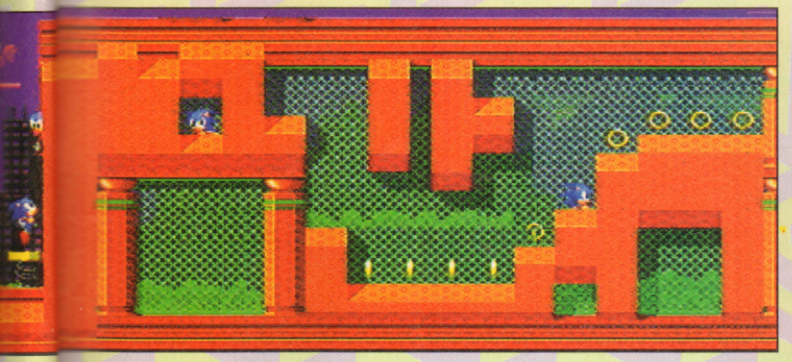




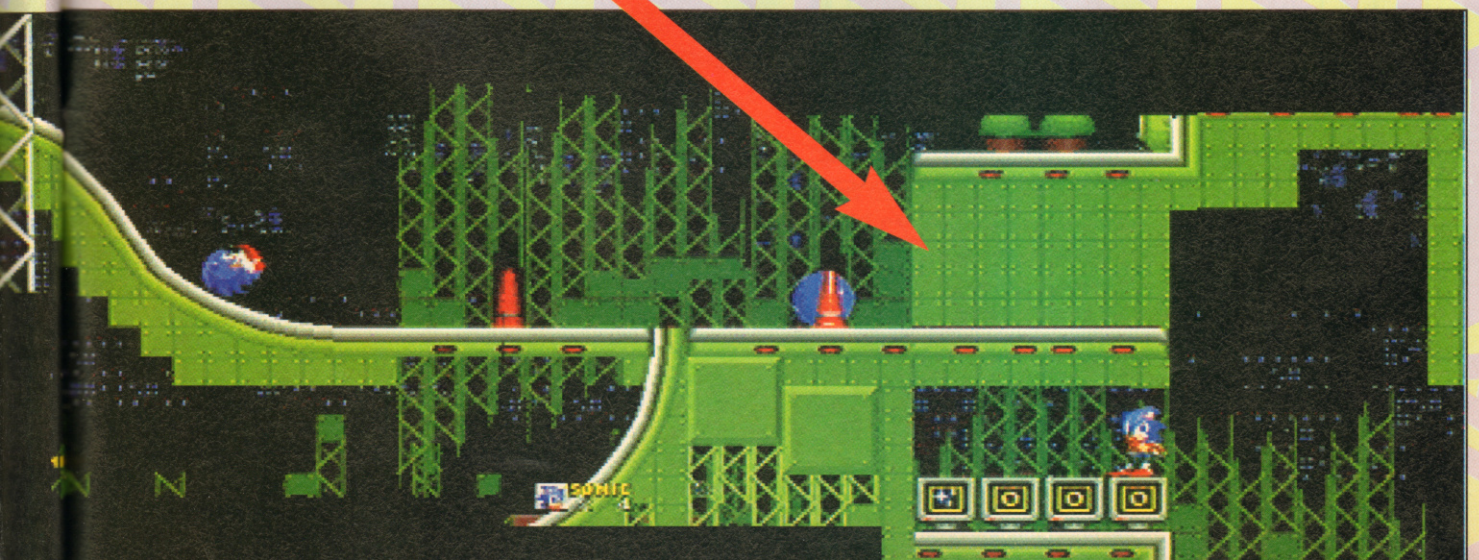
The Spring Yard Zones holds plenty of secret bonuses. The first is in act one (see above); just as you come out of the up hill tunnel you will see a yellow spring. Use this spring to jump into the secret room that is just above it, here you will find ten extra rings. Extra pick-ups can also be found on act 3 (see left). Go to the second huge loop and start rolling down the side. Instead of going into the tunnel on the right, keep rolling past it pushing right on the joypad. You should find yourself slipping into a passage that contains a pair of fast feet and an invincibility token. These can be used to finish the level in record time without getting hit in the process – very handy, you'll agree.



Probably the easiest hidden room to find is in the Starlight Zone at the very beginning of act 1. If you walk to the right you'll see a wall that you normally jump over. Bash through it instead and you will find yourself falling into a room containing 30 rings and an invincibility.



Bashable walls are not so abundant in the Starlight Zone, but they do exist in a couple of places. One of them is in act 3; it's a bit tricky to find as a lot of the act looks very similar. Look closely at the screens opposite and below to check it's exact location. When you actually get to the place pictured, it's just a case of getting a good run up from the hill and then spinning into the wall. Invincibility and 30 rings will be yours when you break through. Money for old rope, eh?



GAME BOY BUSTERS

OPERATION C

On the title screen press UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT, RIGHT, B, A, B, A and you can start on any level. Thanks to Glen Scott for that. Also, here's an unusual way of getting nine lives from Clifford Fox from Chalfont. Firstly, find the place where the enemy emerge in a constant stream. Then position your man so that he can shoot them as they emerge. Now pause the game and get an object to rest on button B, unpause the game and leave it for about ten minutes. When you come back you will have killed enough men to earn nine extra lives.

DRAGON'S LAIR

Derek Harding from Derby has discovered that if you jump from a great height, and know you are going to lose a life, head towards the edge of the screen and you will fall into the next screen. Return to the screen that you were on and you will find that you are still alive.

FORTRESS OF FEAR

Jason Marsh has obviously been busy finding hidden rooms. At the end of level 1-2 (before the dragon), jump left when you are on the platform, walk along and jump down for the first extra room. Walk along the top ledge and jump left for the second. At the end of level 4-0 jump right from the platform for another extra room. At the end of level 4-3, repeat the moves for the first two rooms to find two more.

BOXING

Youri Loedts from Belgium says that you should take Mai Tayson and distribute all your energy on life and power, and ignore speed. Start the game, begin to give your opponent uppercuts and after a while he will fall down – but don't stop giving him uppercuts. The screen will start to scroll upwards and your opponent's energy will have been cleared. Now you can stop hitting him and he will be knocked out.

BURAI FIGHTER DELUXE

We reviewed this last issue and Sean Aikew has already sussed out some level codes.
Level 2 GBHC Level 3 MHBC
Level 4 CDMN Level 5 KDPG
On the ultimate levels try the following codes: GDCP, LMCJ, CCHL, HFKP and BNGN.

MERCENARY FORCE

To start with ¥50,000 instead of ¥5,000, hold down a, b and select and then press up, down, left and right. Thanks to Sean Aikew again for that little gem.

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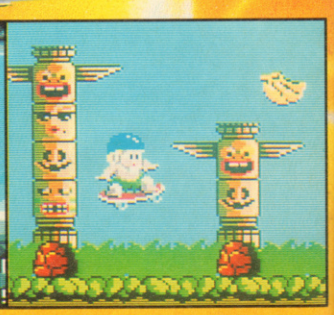

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PC ENGINE BUSTERS

ADVENTURE ISLAND

When you pick up a power pill, you can make it give you full power by pressing button II while it is replenishing you.

POPULOUS

Hey, did ya know there was a music and sound effects test mode for all you Supreme Beings out there. Point to the monitor icon and push button II and DOWN-RIGHT on the joypad simultaneously. Now you can treat your ears to an amazing aural experience.

SHUBIBINMAN 2

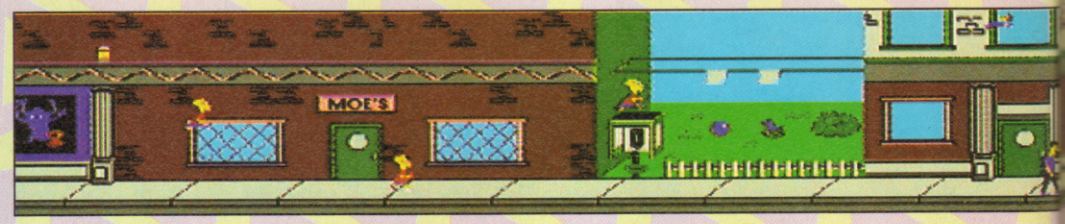
This great game holds untold delights for those who are prepared to cheat. For instance, did you know that you can get full energy at any time? Well, here's how you do it. When the energy depletes, pause the game and press left, select and button II simultaneously. Now watch that meter rise! But the fun doesn't stop there. If you want to get to a special sound select stage, after completing the game, when it displays "to be continued...", hold down SELECT and press UP or DOWN.

DOWNLOAD 2

Now here's a tricky tip for this tough shoot-'em-up. When you get to the level two boss, kill yourself till you are on your last life. Now kill the boss. Just as the guy finishes his exploding sequence, crash into the wall. If it works, you will see a demo for the next level and get infinite lives on the next game. If not, game over, man. Timing is of the essence.

ETERNAL CITY

Fancy starting with max weapons? Well try this. Enter NAXAT SOFT MAX POWER as the password and all the world's treasures will be yours.



THE SIMPSONS

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

NES

The antics of Bart and his nuclear family have captivated TV audiences for over a year now. Nintendo owners have been helping Bart rid Springfield of the space mutants for the last couple of months. But now they are not alone, for RAZE has come up with the ultimate playing guide to make those mutants eat your shorts.

SIMPSON SPRAYS SPRINGFIELD

Level one is a gentle introduction into the art of graffiti. At the start keep walking past the aliens until you see the first spray can. Jump onto the window sill and jump over to get it. Then go back and spray the fire hydrant. Walk under the bouncing aliens and stand right next to the purple cinema sign. Jump up and spray at the same time. Remember to keep an eye out for any people who are wandering about. When they come on screen use your x-ray specs to see whether they are aliens. If they are, jump on them.

Walk past Moe's Tavern and jump onto the phone box. Use a coin to make a call to Moe's. When the call has finished, a purple person will come out of the bar. After you have sprayed him, jump onto the top of the box and onto the washing line. Walk across to the other side and the sheets will drop down and cover the purple toys beneath. Jump off the end of the line onto the windows at the top of the house. Keep jumping until you get the next spray can. Then jump down and spray the fire hydrant underneath.

Keep walking right and jump on the second bush to get a coin. The first bush contains a bee so don't bother jumping on it. Jump over the next load of aliens and collect the coin that will drop out of the middle bush. Enter the Toolworld shop and buy the wrench and the key.

(You can use the key to enter Springfield Retirement home. When you enter the door, you will come out of Moe's Tavern. This helps because you can go back to the theatre when the timer reads 2:00 or 4:00. At these times there will be people standing outside; you can spray them to reduce your goals.)

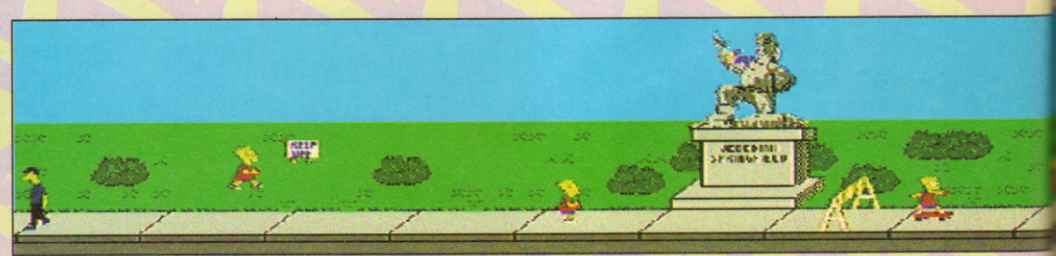
THE SHOPPING MALL

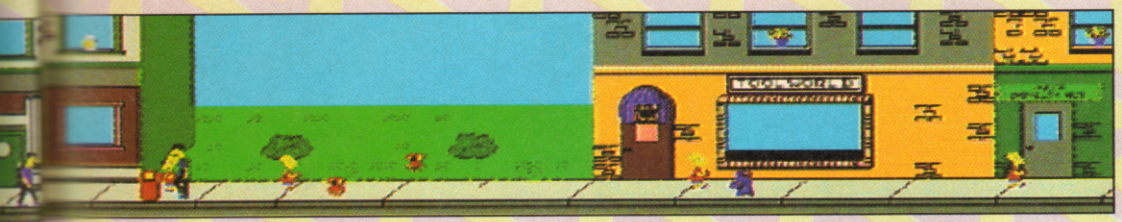
To get a hat that is being worn by an alien, jump on him to dislodge the hat and then jump on him again to get rid of him. Be careful when you come up against any of the mutated shoes that are prowling the mall. Learn their timing so that you can pass without problems. The shoe outside The Really Big Shoe shop may seem to jump randomly but there is a definite pattern in his insane leaping, just watch and wait. When you come to the platforms your jumps will need to be timed to perfection. Try to catch them just as they are on their way down, and leave the actual jump to the very last possible second. Remember that you can normally step just over the edge of the pavement to get those extra millimetres in that jump. On the second candy platform, if you jump up and down on it three times it will carry you over the entire patch of cement.

When you come to the hat with rabbits spewing out of it, just wait until the rabbits are jumping in the air and then grab the hat. Jumping on the trash cans will lead to extra coins and other bonuses.

Go back outside Toolworld and spray the hydrant. Stand behind the hydrant and use the wrench on it. It will spray the purple doorway. Jump on the window sill and over onto the door. Jump back onto the top of the window and stand under the plant. Do a small jump and spray at the same time to get the plant.

Walk along to the Novelty Shop and buy one cherry bomb and about seven rockets (or more if you aren't a very good shot). Jump on the window sill and over onto the door. Jump back onto the top of the window. Do a small jump to spray the





plant. Keep going right, jumping on the window sills, to collect the Krusty Bonus. Jump down and walk to the Toy Shop. Buy the magnet and the whistle.

(The whistle is used when you reach the retirement home. Go to the last window and use it. Grandpa Simpson will open the window and toss loads of coins at you.)

Jump on the window sill and over onto the door. Jump up and spray at the same time to get the plant pot. Go back over to the window but take care to avoid the bouncing alien. Learn his movement pattern so that you know when he is going to speed up. Get the next spray can and jump down.

Walk along and spray the bin, then jump on it and move over onto the window ledge. Jump onto the next one and touch the bucket to spill the paint over the shade. Jump over again and very carefully step off the last window sill so that you land on top of the door. Jump and spray to get that plant pot.

Go to the Pet Shop and jump on the window ledge. Use your cherry bomb and the bird cage will open allowing the bird to fly away. Then jump the alien to get on top of the door and jump back to the top of the window. Jump up and spray the plant pot. Jump down. Walk right and jump up onto the grass. Walk past the sign and you will drop down. As soon as the mail man appears spray him, when he changes colour, run to the left until he walks off the screen. Then go back. Keep walking until the bird that sits on the statue's shoulder appears. Then place a rocket and set it off; it should hit the bird and make it fly off. Then jump the barrier to get on the skateboard.

Skate right, jumping the dogs and aliens. After the first wave of aliens watch out for Nelson as he will try to knock you off your board. When you reach the end, jump the barrier to dismount. Continue to walk right. Spray the bird bath and walk right. When the purple bowling alley sign comes into view, stop and drop a rocket. Walk over it and it will fly off and turn the sign red.

Continue right either walking under or jumping over the aliens. When the purple windows start to appear take them out with rockets. After the last one you should be told that you have finished the level. If you don't then you have missed something, go back and find it.

Then comes Nelson who stands between you and level two. Get quite close and keep bombarding him with water bombs. Make sure you jump when he fires.

The Amusement Park

Be careful when you are trying to jump up to reach balloons on this level because the little spy, Adil, will throw loads of cherry bombs. Learn to master the games that are around in the Fun Park, it is good way of earning extra bonuses. Don't ignore the Test Your Strength contest, it is the only way to get the slingshot, and you need that to get anywhere on this level. Find the four mutants and jump on them, then Lisa will help you dispose of Sideshow Bob at the end of the level. If you bought the magnet on stage one you can use it to win every time on the Wheel of Fortune.

The Museum

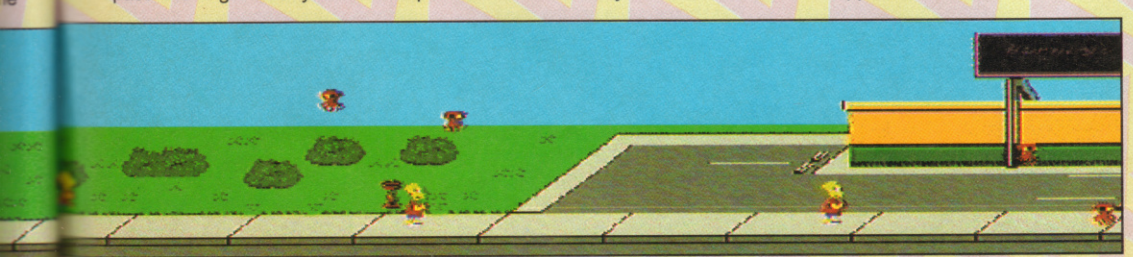
Here you will need to dodge the laser beam security system and shoot out the exit signs with the dart gun. The dart gun can be found hanging on the wall trying to look suspiciously like a picture. The alligators in the lake are there to help more than hinder. Just jump on them and they will carry you across the lake. Take care in the jungle because it is full of dude-eating plants. To get what is inside the glass cases, just bounce on top of them. If you bounce on the one with the head of Jebediah Springfield in it you will become invincible for a short time.

When you come to the brick platforms, you must jump on the next platform as soon as it appears, otherwise you will drop back to the floor. Take great care over the snakes, again learn their timing to ensure progress.

One Up City

On the first level, go to the trashcan at the start and stand just to the left of it. Wait for the alien to follow you. As the alien jumps right press A to jump on the trashcan and buttons A and B together to get a mega jump that will allow you to pick up the 1-UP. At Moe's Tavern, make a crank call and a person will come out. Spray him and the aliens to the right will disappear. Walk to where they used to be and stand in front of the bush. Jump and a 1-UP will appear. Run to the right and catch it before it disappears.

An easy 1-UP is on the window ledge above the door. Just jump across to get it. When you are on the skateboard you will pass a spray can; jump up to get it and then jump up at every bush after until you get a 1-UP. Run to the right side of the Kwik-E-Mart sign and stop when the word Kwik scrolls off the screen. Move to the crack in the sidewalk that is closest and set up a rocket. Launch the rocket and it will hit the E in the sign and a photo of Krusty will appear.



MEGA DRIVE BUSTERS

GYNOUG

If you want infinite credits on this great, but gory, blaster then hold down A, C and LEFT when the Game Over message pops up. You must do this every time if you want infinite credits.

MAGICAL HAT TURBO ADVENTURE

Finding this weird game (with an even weirder name) tricky? Don't despair because up to 14 extra bonus lives can be yours if you jump onto the top of the spinning poles.

GAIN GROUND

To select your level, enter the options screen and move the pointer so that it is pointing at LEVEL. Now press the following buttons in this order: A, C, B, C. The words ROUND SELECT will now pop up below!

SWORD OF SODAN

Wanna warp levels? All you need is two game controllers and a little bit of skill. First of all you have to get a score that ranks number one in the high score table. Now type in your name as HINANP, then you can press START on the second controller to skip levels.

STRIDER

If you are skillful enough to reach level four then you can enjoy a little piece of hidden music. Just go to the large tree trunk with the vine on the ground before the large mechanical dinosaur.

Slowly move Strider from the left side of the trunk to the right by pressing RIGHT a little bit each time until the music changes.

VERYTEX

If you'd like loads of extra lives then quite simply press A, B, C and START all at once to pause the game. While the game is paused hold DOWN and then press START for every extra life you need. If you want to prolong all of those extra lives you can gain a free shield by pressing A, B, C and START to pause the game and then press RIGHT and START.

POWER Up!

Mattel's Power Glove is all the rage in Japan and America – yet UK NES owners won't be able to kick alien ass with this revolutionary input device as neither Nintendo or Mattel have any plans to introduce it into this country. Mark Monteiro, a chap not known for pulling any punches, slips into something more comfortable, tries the Power Glove for size and wonders why the UK is being denied such a wonder item

Those of you who have watched a film called The Wizard (PG) will recall that Corey, played by Fred Savage of the Wonder Years, joins his half-brother Jimmy on a trip to California and enters the Video Games Championship run by Nintendo at Disneyland. Leaving the plot aside for a moment, you will no doubt remember that the film is packed with Nintendo hardware. In particular it features the much mentioned, much mused, little seen Nintendo Power Glove which is worn by a hot-shot games player in an action sequence that strongly impresses itself on the mind. In The Wizard the Power Glove comes across as a very futuristic and attractive appendage to have – however, you also feel it belongs purely to a fictional or unattainable domain... the sort of thing you'd expect Schwarzenegger to be wearing in Terminator.

This, however, is not the case.

Manufactured by Mattel in the US, the glove is a long familiar product to Americans and Canadians. Mattel UK however have no plans to officially release it here, but it's not a complete disaster as several grey importers are stocking the device (see box).

So just what is the Power Glove? It's a revolutionary gauntlet you place on your hand and use instead of the normal NES controller. And it works! So many of these types of peripherals such as the light gun promise much and deliver nothing because they prove so frustratingly inaccurate. The Power Glove succeeds in what it sets out to do. It brings a new dimension to gameplay on the NES. With small, deft movements of your hand (or even flicks of single fingers) you can wipe out enemies, jump obstacles, rescue maidens and still be home in time for tea.

Frowning sceptically and still to be convinced, you ask: 'So how exactly does this wonderful new gadget work?' The set-up procedure is simple. The package comprises three

WHERE TO GET IT

Many thanks to Medlantic for supplying the Power Glove reviewed on these pages. Medlantic at 10 Church Street, Market Bosworth, Warwickshire CV13 OLD (☎ 0455 291865) have a large supply of the revolutionary controller and reckon they offer a good backup service. The retail price is £44.95 (including post and packing).

CAN U FEEL THE FORCE?

The U-Force is a very special state-of-the-art device that eliminates the need to hold or touch anything. An array of sensors allow you to control the game simply by moving your hands in space. It features turbo fire and can be used with any game that doesn't require the Zapper light gun or power pad. Don't get too excited as the controller is only available in the States from Broderbund for $79.95.

small sensor boxes and an LED panel which are connected by tubing to form an L shape. This contraption must be fixed to the right side of your TV. From one of the sensors comes a lead which must be connected to one of the NES's joypad sockets. On this lead is a junction box to which the Power Glove lead is connected.

Once everything is plugged in, put a game in the NES and power up. The glove beeps and becomes active immediately. Pressing Start or Select on the glove turns on the LED panel. Next, make a fist several times so the glove gets to know the size of your fingers and thumb. After

calibrating, point the glove at the middle of the TV screen and push Center. From now on the glove can tell exactly which way you move. Pressing Center sets your starting point and ensures accuracy. Moving the glove away from centre is like pressing the NES direction pad. Look at the LED lights to see which way you move the glove away from the centre.

The three sensors emit a sensory zone and it is important to always point your glove towards the TV when playing a game. Sitting on a chair instead of the floor will thus help you stay in the sensing zone. Additionally, the smaller and tighter your moves are around your centre position, the faster your man changes direction.

From the picture you will notice that the Power Glove comes with two arrays of keys numbered 0 to 9. These allow you to enter programs or glove configurations for various games. For instance, if you're playing a boxing game, you might use program 7 which requires you to make a fist with the glove and punch the air to make your onscreen character punch. On the other hand, with a game like *Rad Racer* you would use program 9 which forces you to grip an invisible steering wheel to control your car. The Power Glove instructions include an index of programs, and all you need to do is find which program will work the best on the particular game you wish to play. Furthermore, you will be delighted to hear that the Power Glove includes slow motion and rapid fire controls. The many virtues of the Power Glove include its great accuracy, the tangibility it brings to games playing and, for those who are so inclined, its attractively futuristic aura. The only foreseeable drawback with Mattel's revolutionary appendage is that no left-handed glove exists. Otherwise it's an entirely praiseworthy piece of hardware which will make you want to try out all your old games anew. Of course, not all games are suited to the Power Glove's control method – car racing games, sports simulations and some shoot-'em-ups work exceptionally well. Arcade adventures which require pixel perfection are best played with the existing NES controller.

HAND IN GLOVE

To give the Power Glove a thorough work out, we pitted it against three very different types of game: *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!*, *Captain Skyhawk* and *Super Mario Bros 3*. Following are our findings.

CAPTAIN SKYHAWK

As there's no definitive program designed for this game, a general program for flight simulators must be chosen. The program

we chose allows you to move the glove forward or backwards through space to move the plane in the desired direction. Likewise, moving left or right will bank the plane to the left or right. The thumb and index finger control buttons A and B respectively.

Accuracy
Difficult when flying through ravines and tight spots because of the responsiveness.

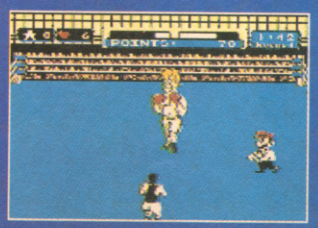
Responsiveness
The slightest movement sends the plane careering out of control so you've got to be careful.

Fatigue
Wears you out quickly as you'll find yourself making constant rapid movements left and right.

OVERALL **81%**
Turns *Captain Skyhawk* into a challenging and more entertaining game.

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH-OUT!

There's a program on the glove specifically for this game; it simulates real life boxing action. And, boy, does it bring you out in a sweat. Punching the air in an up, down, left or right motion, directs your boxer's fists. With your hand open, your boxer will dodge the assailant's punches. A Star punch is possible by bringing the glove in towards you.



Accuracy
Excellent. You punch upwards and your onscreen character does likewise.

Responsiveness
Virtually instantaneous which makes for a highly charged atmosphere.

Fatigue
Better and safer than belting it out with Tyson for real. You'll sweat buckets.

OVERALL **93%**
It's as if the Power Glove was made for *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!*

SUPER MARIO BROS 3

Again, there's a program available on the glove for the original Mario game. As the control method hasn't changed, you'll

find the controls offered by the glove adequate. Directional movement of Mario is governed by position of the glove while buttons A and B are activated by bending the thumb and index fingers respectively.

Accuracy
Reasonable. When pixel perfect jumping is necessary you'll find the going tough.

Responsiveness
A simple flick of the finger is all that's needed to get Mario motoring or slowing down.

Fatigue
You will tire quickly if you have your arm stretched out. Better to rest it on a chair.

OVERALL **74%**
You'll get further using the NES controller, but it won't be as much fun.

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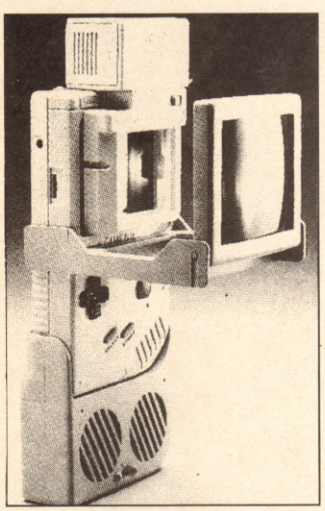

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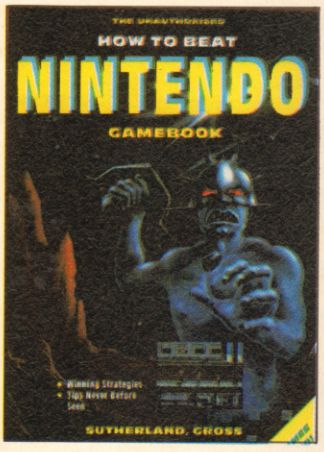

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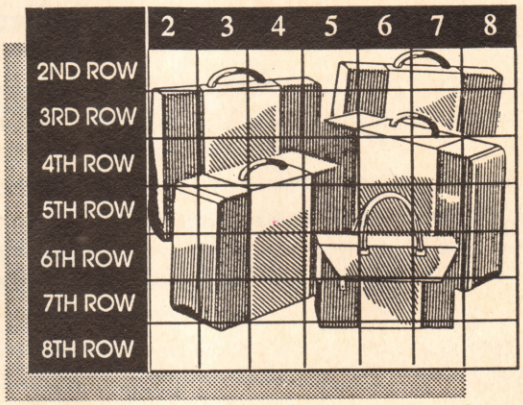

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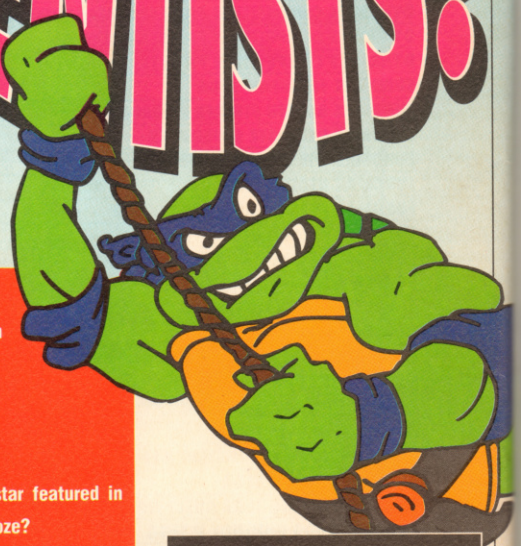

Baffle boffins and confuse graduates by owning your own Nessie. Okay, so this isn't the sort of monster that you'll be able to keep in your bath. Neither is it green and slimy. However, this Nessie is sure to get the neighbours flocking to see it, for this Nessie is the world's top-selling console.

Thanks to those helpful, albeit a tad crazy, folks at Deighton Jacobs, Nintendo's UK PR people, we have a Nintendo Entertainment System all ready and waiting to unleash itself upon an unsuspecting winner.

If you haven't already got a NES then this is your lucky day. If you have seen the light and already purchased the 8-bit smasher, then just imagine the convenience of having two NES machines in the house, or even three, or four... With games like *Shadowgate, Defender of the Crown, Solstice* and *Super Mario Bros 3*, you can be sure that the NES has a game to suit all tastes. The NES is undoubtedly the fastest growing, raddest, baddest machine on the market.

The trendy NES pack that Nintendo have donated comes complete with *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles*, two control pads, TV lead, power adaptor, fuse, screws... in fact everything you need to be up and running within minutes.

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Any attempts to bribe members of the RAZE editorial team will be punished accordingly: i.e., accepted with thanks.

QUESTIONS

1. How many homes in Japan have a NES?
   a) Every home
   b) 1 in 3
   c) 1 in 20
2. Name the (c)rap star featured in Turtles II: Secret of Ooze?
   a) Strawberry Cornetto
   b) 99 cornet with chopped nuts
   c) Vanilla Ice
3. What are the newest American Nintendo cult characters called?
   a) Squashed hedgehogs
   b) Battletoads
   c) Reincarnated Lemmings

I BELIEVE IN THE MONSTER

I really want to win a NES because my big brother's got one and he won't let me play on it.

1 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ 2 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ 3 A ☐ B ☐ C ☐

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You will see from independant review comments that we are undoubtedly their first choice and that was before the complete solution was launched. If you have just purchased your Amiga and are not sure what to buy next, then just read the comments or send for full review and demo disk.

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Zero: Now under normal circumstances cheap usually means poor quality but this is not the case with Rombo. Why? cos Vidi-Amiga is the best digitiser for under £500 and I've tried them all.

Amiga Format: Where quality is concerned, Vidi produces some of the best results I've seen on any digitiser at any price.

Amiga User International: The latest addition to the Rombokit is called Vidi-RGB and brings this already impressive package to the realms of totally amazing. CONCLUSION: Who will find Vidi-Amiga useful? The answer to this is almost anyone with a video recorder or camera and a passing interest in graphics.

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